

TEACHERS' REPORTED BELIEFS AND FEELINGS ABOUT RACE TALK

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This three-article dissertation addressed a central question: What do teachers describe as their beliefs and feelings about race and teaching, and how can we build practices in teacher education to support them? Considering vast evidence of racial inequities, research has stressed that teachers need a deeper understanding of race and the ways in which schools and society have contributed to racial inequity and injustice. First, through a systematic review of literature on race and teacher education, emergent themes illustrated (a) shifts toward race in teacher education programs, (b) components of a race-related curriculum, and (c) pedagogical practices that center race. Next, two empirical studies drew on data from the Teachers Race Talk Survey. The first study built on the concept of self-efficacy to examine differences in and predictors of teachers' reported feelings of preparedness to discuss race with students. Hypothesis testing and logistic regression analysis of data from 495 teachers revealed that teachers who had race-focused teacher education programs, taught mostly students of color, and had 10 or more years of experience reported significantly higher feelings of preparedness. Race-focused teacher education programs and perceptions of parental and administrator support were significantly strong predictors of preparedness for race talk. The second study used a Color-blind Racism Framework to analyze how 336 White teachers described their beliefs and feelings about talking

with students about race and police violence. Findings demonstrated that many White teachers believe race is important to discuss, but they often opt out of race talks due to fear or to protect their own interests, namely their jobs. Regarding police violence, teachers counter their beliefs about the importance of race through their color-blind approach to understand and explain race. This dissertation found that opportunities to learn about race in teacher education programs are essential for supporting teachers in building race-centered practices. Implications for developing teachers': racial critical consciousness—race consciousness and knowledge and strategies for engaging in practices that disrupt inequities; connections with parents and administrators; and opportunities for race-engagement are discussed. Potential future research with sub-groups of teachers and approaches for incorporating multiple data perspectives are also considered.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

My oldest son is in his second semester of college, and he often asks me for feedback on his writing. As a former K-12 teacher of six years, I appreciate that he is so diligent and uses every resource he can, especially me. As I review his papers, I am often reminded that so many other students may not have a human resource in an adult as does my son. His most recent draft supposedly addressed racism, as he attempted to connect Welty's (1991) *A Worn Path* to broader societal issues of race today. While reading, I cringed. I was especially alarmed where he wrote, "Although race has occasionally been a problematic issue, America has taken great strides to rid the nation of racism" (Alvarez, draft of paper #3, p. 1). In this excerpt, my son unknowingly counters Bell's (1992) argument that racism is permanent in the United States (U.S.), while demonstrating what Bonilla-Silva (2014) referred to as racial optimism—a belief that a movement from Jim Crow to Post-Civil Rights symbolizes a profound change in societal racism. I asked my son about the evidence he had to make such claims – that "America had taken great strides to rid the nation of racism," but he had none. My son was clearly articulating one interpretation of how race operates; and, without any evidence, he realized he was repeating what he learned in school from some his teachers and society – that we are living in a post-racial and consequently a post-racist society. While we talked about how his "schooling" has shaped his understanding of race, our conversation shifted to schools and institutions, more broadly. I offered some different readings, talked extensively with him, and challenged him to rethink and

significantly revise his essay. More than anything, my son shared that his teachers in school had helped shape his views on the current state of race and racism in society.

I share this recent story about my son to illustrate that teachers' worldviews, perspectives, and beliefs about race can shape students' school experiences' (Milner, 2010). I also recognize that much of the insights about race and racism that I share with my son stem from my doctoral studies. It was not until my doctoral studies that I had opportunities and resources to explore and interpret my experiences as a Brown person/Latino with Mexican ancestry. In fact, the only times I remember discussing race in class, as a teacher, was when my scripted curriculum directed me to do so. The reality is that many teachers are not left to make professional judgments about their curriculum and instructional practices and they operate from scripted curriculum materials (Milner, 2013b). As a student in a Catholic school, race never emerged in class discussions, and I certainly never had the opportunities or support to discuss racism I experienced and witnessed in the hallways, cafeteria, and at various athletic events.

In addition, many of the insights I share come from investigating research questions on collaborative projects investigating questions such as: (a) What factors contribute to the Cradle-to-Prison-Pipeline, (b) How do teacher self-efficacy beliefs influence teachers' classroom management practices (Delale-O'Connor, Alvarez, Murray & Milner, 2017) and (c) What roles do race and traumatic experiences among students play in preparing future teachers to meet the needs of all learners (Alvarez, 2017)? These projects have generated new questions that drive my area of research. For instance, why do teachers engage or not engage in discourses of race in the classroom with students? What factors and mechanisms influence how and to what degree teachers engage in dialogues about race, violence and trauma among each other as educators as well as with their students? How do we support future teachers' knowledge and practices in

teacher education to understand students' outside of school experiences in order to cultivate culturally responsive practices in real schools and classrooms? In essence, my research focuses on understanding how best to support teachers in building instructional practices that center race.

1.1 FRAMING THE CENTRALITY OF RACE

Race, in the U.S. context, continues to be an essential dimension of society and education. Most people recognize that race and racism were central features of settler colonialism, enslavement of Africans, and, later, Jim Crow segregationist policies (Bell, 1992; Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Harris, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2014); yet, some people, including teachers, may believe that the numerous racial inequities from yesterday's racism somehow disappear in today's post-Civil Rights society. Without opportunities to learn about the salience of race, teachers may enter schools with a colorblind orientation—a belief that race is inconsequential in the present post-Civil Rights era—and fail to see the connections among historical and present inequities, oppressive systems, and deficit beliefs.

There is a wealth of evidence documenting disparities and inequities inside and outside of school. In fact, along with higher rates of poverty, research has illustrated that school policies, school discipline, tracking, and access to courses and school options appear to mostly influence children and families of color. Consider, for instance, the following challenges Black and Latino children may encounter:

- More than twice as likely to live at or below the poverty line than White people (Proctor, Semega, & Kollar, 2016)

- Exposure to community and school violence (Alvarez, 2017; Burdick-Will, 2013; Fisher, Viano, Curran, Pearman & Gardella, 2018),
- Fewer opportunities for employment, transportation and quality health care (Munin, 2012; Tate, 2008)
- Unsafe and harmful living conditions (Kozol, 2012; Milam, Furr-Holden, & Leaf, 2010; Noguera, 2003).
- Inequitable per pupil expenditures compared to schools and districts serving mostly White students (Ladson-Billings, 2006)
- More inexperienced and uncertified teachers (CRDC, 2016)
- Inequitable access to information about attending schools with more resources (Delale-O'Connor, 2018).
- More than three times as likely to be suspended than White students (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2017)
- Underrepresented in advance placement and gifted programs (Gay, 2010)
- Overrepresented in special education programs (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Blanchett, 2006)
- Less access to advanced math and science courses than White students (CRDC, 2016)

Drawing on these and other disparities, research has stressed that teachers need a clear understanding of race and the ways in which schools and society have contributed to racial inequity (Seider & Huguley, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2012). For example, many people of color today remain marginalized by historical segregationist housing policies and discriminatory hiring practices (Katznelson, 2005). Without recognizing the salience of race and

the history of institutional policies and practices that have marginalized many people and youth of color, some teachers may fail to see systemic inequities that can influence the lives and realities of students of color and instead rely on deficit perspectives of students of color.

To further articulate the importance of preparing teachers to be conscious about race, in the context of schools and classrooms, educational researchers refer to a racial demographic divide between White teachers (82%) and students of color who comprise almost half of the student population (Banks, 2007; Howard, 2010; Milner, 2015). While Figure 1 represents a national perspective on student racial demographics, it is important to note that the 10 largest urban school districts in the U.S. have an estimated enrollment of over 80% students of color (Sable, Plotts & Mitchell, 2010). In some urban school districts, such as Camden City School District in New Jersey, with approximately 11,000 students enrolled in 2013, almost the entire student population (98%) is comprised of Black and Latino students (CRDC, 2016).

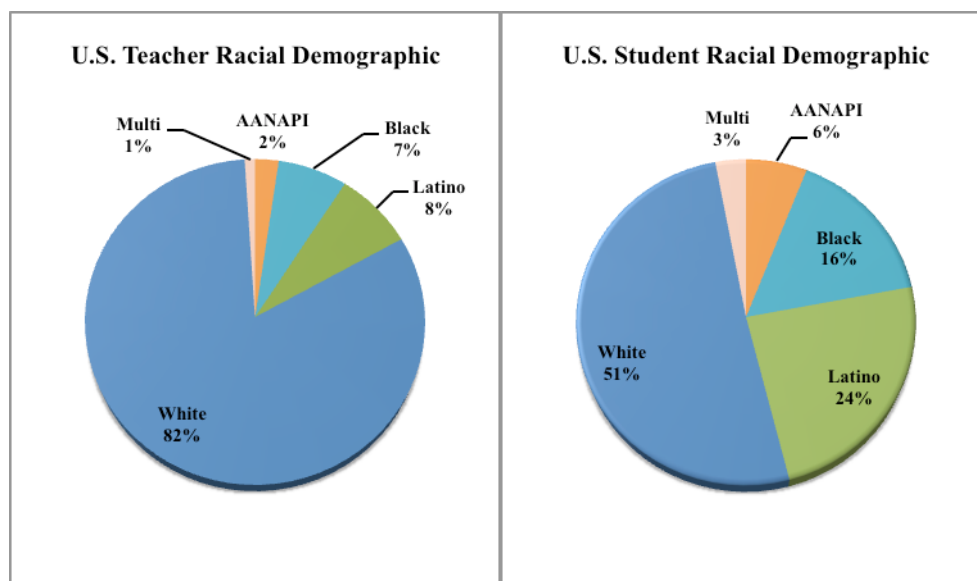


Figure 1. Teacher-student racial demographic divide. Adapted from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2015). This figure illustrates that a majority White teacher population in U.S. public schools are teaching students of different races, mostly Black and Latino students.

In terms of a racial demographic divide, the enrollment data for large urban school districts may illustrate an even greater trepidation related to preparing teachers to be race-conscious. That is,

for children of color in urban school settings, race may have an even greater influence on their educational experiences, particularly if teachers have not had opportunities to explore the salience of race. The argument is that teachers must be prepared to teach in a growing racially diverse student population so all children are best served in the classroom and to ensure that teachers are not unintentionally contributing to racial disparities and inequities.

Although preparing teachers to interrupt a history of racial inequity is necessary, it is also challenging. For example, evidence shows that teachers are fearful, unwilling to learn about race, or simply unprepared to engage issues related to race and racism (Buchanan, 2015; Pimentel, 2010; Sleeter, 2001; Watson, 2012). These studies report that teachers struggle with feeling prepared to engage race due to their unwillingness to acknowledge and admit that racial inequity exists and can be perpetuated through their teaching practices. Teacher education research has also argued that when teachers are unprepared to engage race, they may either intentionally or unintentionally resort to race-evasive strategies (Sleeter, 1993; Sue, 2015), experience conflicts with students from different racial backgrounds (Delpit, 1995), or adopt colorblind approaches and practices (Milner, 2010). Ultimately, to avoid further marginalizing children of color teacher education programs must prepare teachers to recognize long-standing systems of racial injustice and to develop instructional practices that disrupt racial inequities.

1.2 PURPOSE STATEMENT

In this dissertation, I focus on understanding what teachers describe as their beliefs and feelings about race and teaching, and how researchers and teacher educators can build practices in teacher education to support teachers. I aim to contribute to theory, research and practice by examining

teachers' self-reported beliefs related to the importance of discussing race with students in their classroom, their feelings of preparedness to engage in such race dialogues, their perceptions of their teacher education programs, and their perceptions of administrator and parental support for engaging in race talks with students. Until researchers and teacher educators have a better sense of how best to support teachers' development of knowledge and practices that center race, preparing teachers to teach all students well, while disrupting racial disparities and inequities, will remain a serious challenge. Essentially, whether or not teachers are prepared to engage race could be critical for advancing educational equity or fighting against it (Milner, 2015).

1.3 DEFINING KEY TERMS

In this section, I briefly define terms that appear throughout the following chapters. In chapter one, I provide a much more substantive explanation of the following terms: race, racialization, Whiteness, and racism.

Race is socially, historically, physically (not biologically) and legally constructed (Milner, 2015) to marginalize people of color through social systems of oppression, racism, and inequity (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Harris, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2014). European colonial settlers, as Omi and Winant described, invented race to symbolize conflicts and interests among different types of human bodies for the purpose of developing a racialized social system, one that assigns privileges according to racial group membership. Privileged European (and later, White) people shifted the racialization process—the development of racial identity markers used to rationalize the subordination of and enslavement of non-White people — according to societal needs, while maintaining power and privilege (Omi & Winant, 2014).

In various contexts, the power and privilege benefits associated with being White are often referred to as Whiteness. Harris (1993) suggested benefits of Whiteness were akin to owning property. While I explore this concept later, I want to note that I use *Whiteness to refer to both individual belief systems, as well as social systems designed to protect and privilege White people*. Although racism, as I discuss next, and Whiteness are related, Whiteness embodies a more complex synergy between racial identity and agency. Harris made this point, to be White, in some historical contexts, meant freedom, opportunity, and a sense of control over one's own life. Whiteness also refers to how social systems and institutions operate and tend to benefit White people. Sleeter (2017), a White researcher, made a compelling argument that teacher education programs, one type of institution, heavily cater to the needs of White students. Consider the recurrent anxiety and stress some teacher educators of color experience each semester knowing a new group of White students have the power to protest curriculum and instructional practices that center on race (Matias, 2013). As Matias described, students may deploy Whiteness to dissuade professors in higher education institutions from teaching about race or to influence their professors' approach to addressing critical social issues. I say more about this in chapter two as I explore teachers' perceptions of their teacher education programs. In short, Whiteness is a privilege or idea and not an action.

One can protect or promote Whiteness by engaging in racism. *Racism is an act of intentionally or unintentionally using power and privilege through policies and discursive practices to further marginalize people of color* (Carter, 2007). *People and institutions engage in racism by perpetuating a set of unchallenged beliefs, practices, and systems that support the racial status quo*. I also want to stress that racism has always been present within U.S. social systems (Bell, 1992). Maintaining social systems built on the construction of race, institutions,

including educational systems, have deliberately shaped the lives and realities of many people of color. Higher education institutions, for example, have operated as oppressive racial structures through colonialism (Wilder, 2013), reconstruction (Brown & Davis, 2009), before and after Civil Rights legislation (Brint & Karabel, 1989), as well as today (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013). Additionally, in 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court, legally sanctioned segregation (see *Plessy v. Ferguson*), and the Jim Crow era of racism centered on discriminatory practices via employment opportunities (Drake & Cayton, 1962), government support (Anyon, 2014), and housing (Gotham, 2000; Rothstein, 2015), to name a few. A well documented history of institutional racism describes how the distribution of opportunities for people of color have been *controlled* and *distributed* according to societal needs, or as Bell (2004) argued when White people's interests converged with movements toward racial justice.

1.4 DATA SOURCES

This dissertation draws on data from the Teachers Race Talk Survey (Milner, Delale-O'Connor, Murray & Alvarez, 2016). The Teachers Race Talk Survey (TRTS) is an exploratory survey designed to gain a sense of how teachers report their beliefs and feelings toward engaging in race talk. Although one issue that could be raised is the choice in survey design, the TRTS was not meant to “measure” the strength of teachers' beliefs and feelings or the degree to which teachers agree or disagree with statements (as in scaled responses). Unlike research that has existed for quite some time, there were no instruments I found in the literature that centered on understanding teachers' beliefs and feelings regarding race talk. This means, there were neither prior instruments from which to build nor established constructs or domains.

The survey includes 32 items, beginning with 8 demographic items, including race and years teaching, for example. The TRTS format provides teachers with forced response options of “yes,” “no,” or “not sure” to 12 items related to topics of race within educational contexts. The close-ended data portion of the TRTS is ideal for descriptive and predictive analyses. In addition, each close-ended item includes an optional open-ended response for participants to explain their “yes,” “no,” or “not sure” response. The open-ended response portion of the TRTS provides an opportunity for interpretive analysis. The full TRTS is located in Appendix A.

Regarding sampling, not all teachers (across the U.S. context) had an equal chance of receiving the invite to participate in the TRTS. The results and interpretations from this study only apply to the sample of teachers who were invited and self-selected into the study. For teachers who received the invite to participate and opted out, I realize non-response bias could be a concern in terms of influencing the findings of this study. However, non-response bias is most critical when researchers use instruments with the purpose of trying to make causal arguments about a specific population (Fan & Yan, 2010), which was not the case in this research design.

1.5 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

In chapter one, I draw on teacher education literature published after *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 with a guiding question: what themes emerge from the literature on race and teacher education? I narrow my search to 90 articles that focus on pre-service teachers in teacher education programs in the U.S. context. I discuss three emergent themes from the literature. The first theme, *Structural Shifts Toward Race in Teacher Education*, describes a historical account

of how race has surfaced as a site of knowledge in teacher education. The second emergent theme, *Strategically Designed Race-related Curriculum*, highlights a body of literature that discusses “what” teacher education programs do to prepare teachers to engage race. Studies illustrate the importance of promoting teacher reflection on race, addressing teacher tensions with race, and incorporating curricular interventions for teaching about race. The third emergent theme, *Pedagogical Practices that Foreground Race*, describes “how” teacher education programs prepare teachers to engage race, particularly through modeling race-centered practices and using race-related theories to inform teachers’ practices.

Chapter two provides an analysis of close-ended TRTS data from 495 teachers. I investigate the following two research questions:

- 1). Do teachers’ reported feelings of preparedness to engage in race talk differ by (a) perceptions of their teacher education programs, (b) teachers’ race, (c) classroom student racial demographic, and (c) number of years of teaching experience?
- 2). What are the strongest predictors of reported feelings of preparedness for race talk?

This chapter builds on the teacher education literature and the concept of self-efficacy to illustrate how factors, such as race, may be related to teachers’ feelings of preparedness to engage issues of race. This chapter provides the following evidence. Teachers who perceived their teacher education programs as effective tended to report significantly higher feelings of preparedness for race talk. Second, teacher perceptions of parental and administrator support are significantly strong predictors of reported preparedness; however, teachers who work in a majority White student population reported significantly lower perceptions of parental support for race talk than teachers in non-White student populations. Third, teachers who teach mostly students of color tended to report feeling more prepared for race talk than teachers who teach a

majority White student population. Finally, teachers with fewer than 10 years of experience, on average, show virtually the same reported preparedness as pre-service teachers.

In the third chapter, I use Bonilla-Silva's (2014) Color-Blind Racism Framework to analyze open-ended responses from 336 White teachers who participated in the Teachers' Race Talk Survey. Chapter three centers on the following research questions:

- 1). How do White teachers describe the importance of discussing race in the classroom?
- 2). How do White teachers explain their feelings of preparedness to discuss race?
- 3). How do White teachers' beliefs manifest in their decisions to discuss or not discuss police violence toward unarmed Black people?

The data show that the majority of White teachers in this sample reported that race is important to discuss. However, many reported feeling unprepared to discuss race, often enacting color-blind ideologies and opting to protect their own interests out of fear. Further, some teachers struggled with considering discussions of police violence on Black bodies, as their color-blind responses tended to counter their understanding of race as a site of critical consciousness.

In the final chapter, I conclude with a reflective overview of my research. I extract the salient points from each of the two empirical chapters to highlight implications for theory and practice. Additionally, I provide recommendations based on what I have learned through my reviews of literature and evidence I have collected and analyzed. I end by establishing new lines of research that have surfaced from my work on this dissertation project.

2.0 CHAPTER ONE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON RACE AND TEACHER EDUCATION

In this chapter, I review literature on race and teacher education—namely the preparation of teacher to center race in their Pre-K-12 practices. I discuss three overarching themes that emerged from my review. The first theme, *Structural Shifts Toward Race in Teacher Education*, describes a historical account of the prevalence of race in teacher education. The second emergent theme highlights a body of literature that describes three core components of a *Strategically Designed Race-related Curriculum*: (a) promoting teacher reflection on race, (b) addressing teacher tensions with race, and (c) incorporating curricular interventions for teaching about race. The third emergent theme, *Pedagogical Practices that Foreground Race*, describes “how” teacher educators prepare teachers to engage race, particularly through modeling race-centered practices and using race-related theories to inform teachers’ practices.

2.1 CENTERING RACE IN TEACHERS’ WORK

Researchers have underscored that teachers need a clear understanding of race and the ways in which schools and society have contributed to racial inequity (Seider & Huguley, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2012). Inside of school, policies and practices are far more likely to negatively influence the school experiences among students of color. For instance, zero

tolerance and various school discipline policies disproportionately impact students of color. Studies show that Black students are more than three times as likely to be suspended than White students (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2017; CRDC, 2016). Researchers have documented an underrepresentation of children of color in advance placement and gifted programs (Gay, 2010) and overrepresentation of children of color in special education programs (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Blanchett, 2006). While studies on school discipline and representation in special education and advanced placement make strong connections to teachers' beliefs and subjective assessments of children of color, other studies illustrate how race is tied to issues of resource availability and access.

In terms of course availability and curriculum, schools enrolling 75% or more Black and Latino children provide less access to advance math and science courses (CRDC, 2016). In fact, as Figure 2 shows, schools with low shares of Black and Latino students are more likely to offer Calculus, Physics, Chemistry, and Algebra 2 than schools with high Black and Latino student enrollments. One could argue that this gap in course availability may advantage students who attend schools with a majority White student population, particularly in the area of college readiness and early access to careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

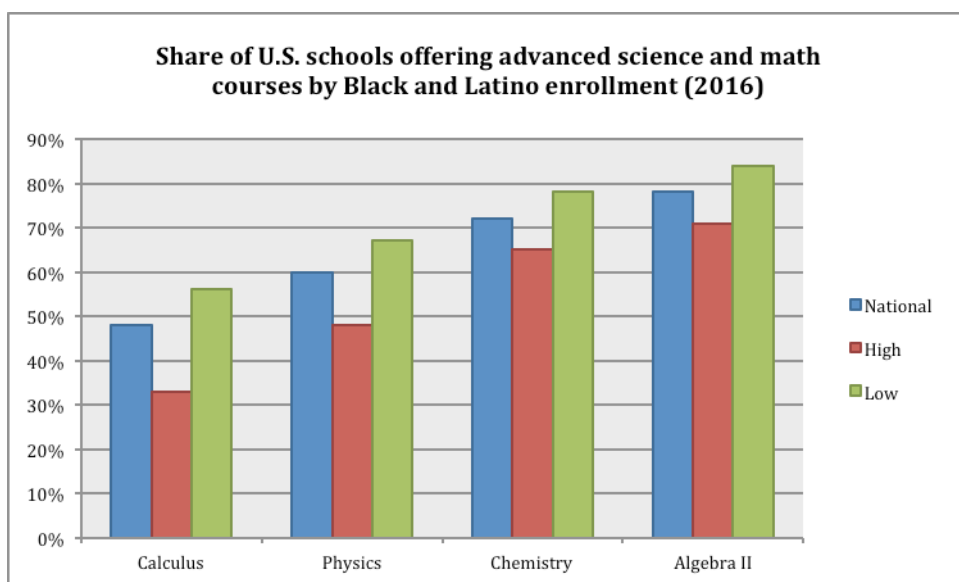


Figure 2. Advanced course availability in schools by Black and Latino enrollment (2016). Along with the national average, this figure provides a comparison of advanced level math and science courses available at schools that enroll more than 75% students of color, particularly Black and Latino students (High) and schools that enroll less than 25% Black and Latino students (Low). This figure illustrates that students who attend schools with mostly Black and Latino students are less likely to have advanced math and science courses than students who attend schools with fewer Black and Latino students.

It could also be argued that school-funding issues may be responsible for course availability. Evidence does show that per pupil expenditures at schools serving mostly students of color are scarcely equitable when compared to schools and districts serving mostly White students (Ladson-Billings, 2006), perhaps limiting the resources needed for curriculum or advanced courses for students (Baker, Sciarra, & Farrie, 2015). And, while some parents purportedly have choices about which school their children can attend, families of color may have inequitable access to information about enrolling their children in schools with more resources (Delale-O'Connor, 2018).

According to the abovementioned national data and studies highlighting racial disparities, inside of school policies and practices related to school discipline, tracking, and access to courses and school options appear to mostly influence children and families of color. Such inequities inside of schools serving mostly students of color may further cultivate an ethos of lower expectations and deficit perspectives of children of color (Milner, 2010), as well as foster a

school culture that overemphasizes compliance and following orders (Anyon, 1980; Haberman, 2000). Further, this evidence illustrates the centrality of race and the ways in which racial inequities can be perpetuated inside of schools.

Meanwhile, the case for centering race in teachers' work also builds on racial disparities outside of school. For example, students of color have disproportionately high chances of living at or below the poverty line (Milner, 2013a). In fact, one estimate, drawing on 2015 national poverty rates, shows that Black and Latino people are more than twice as likely to live at or below the poverty line than White people; and, the median household income for Black people was about \$25,000 below the median household income for White people (Proctor, Semega, & Kollar, 2016). Of course, these vast differences in earned income are, to some degree, related to educational opportunities and outcomes. Such economic restrictions may dictate, for example, where families can afford to live and what schools their children can attend. Moreover, issues related to poverty have been connected to students' school experiences and outcomes (Pearman, 2017). Numerous other studies have shown that children of color tend to be over-represented in hyper-segregated communities with limited opportunities for employment, transportation and quality health care (Munin, 2013; Tate, 2008). This research also points to Black and Latino children being overly exposed to community and school violence (Alvarez, 2017; Burdick-Will, 2013; Fisher, Viano, Curran, Pearman & Gardella, 2017) and harsh and harmful living conditions (Kozol, 2012; Milam, Furr-Holden, & Leaf, 2010; Noguera, 2003).

This research, highlighting various racial disparities and inequities inside and outside of school, suggests that a firm understanding of race is essential for teachers. Without opportunities to learn about the salience of race, teachers may enter schools with a colorblind orientation—a belief that race is inconsequential in the present post-Civil Rights era— and fail to see the

connection between disproportionalities and oppressive systems and beliefs. That is, without recognizing the salience of race, teachers may see students of color from a deficit perspective. Many researchers stress a need for teachers to center race in their work, often referring to the racial demographic divide (see Figure 3)¹ between White teachers and students of color (Banks, 2007; Howard, 2010; Milner, 2015).

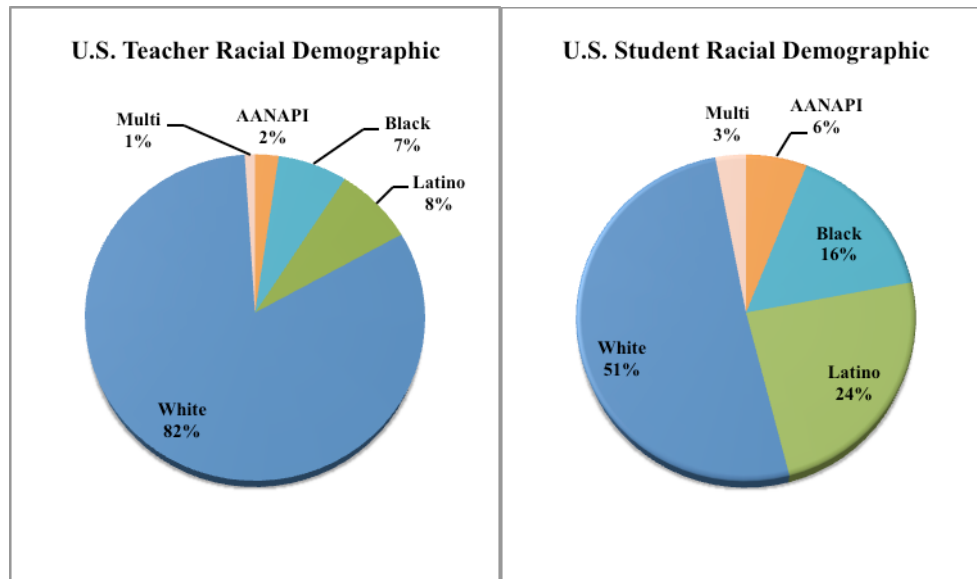


Figure 3. Teacher-student racial demographic divide. Adapted from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2015). This figure illustrates that a majority White teacher population in U.S. public schools are teaching students of different races, mostly Black and Latino students.

Figure 3 indicates that a majority of U.S. public school teachers are White, while about half of the U.S. student population is made up of students of color. The argument is that teachers must be prepared to teach in a growing racially diverse student population not just so all children are best served in the classroom but also to ensure teachers are not unintentionally contributing to racial disparities and inequities. Whether or not teachers are prepared to engage race could be critical for fighting against educational equity or fighting for educational equity (Milner, 2015).

¹ While Figure 3 represents a national look at student racial demographics, it is important to note that the enrollment for the 10 largest urban school districts in the U.S. have an estimated enrollment of over 80% students of color (Sable, Plotts & Mitchell, 2010), and in some urban school districts, such as Camden City School District in New Jersey with approximately 11,000 students enrolled in 2013, almost the entire student population (98%) is comprised of Black and Latino students (CRDC, 2016 <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/Page?t=d&eid=28275&syk=7&pid=2008>) These data may illustrate an even greater trepidation related to the racial demographic divide. That is, for children of color in urban school settings, race may have an even greater influence on their educational experiences, particularly if teachers have not explored race.

Throughout this chapter, I use “race-centered practices”; by race-centered practices, I mean a rejection of color-blindness and a focus on addressing and attempting to disrupt local and broader issues of racial inequity in schools and society (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Leonardo, 2013; Milner, 2012; 2015). Race-centered practices build on students’ racial identities and experiences for the purposes of sharing knowledge and bridging realities between teachers and students (Anzaldúa, 2015; Milner, 2012; Tatum, 1992). Next, I provide background on and conceptual framing of the interconnectedness between race and racism. Then, I describe my methodological approach including my search strategies, rationales, and the analytic approaches and techniques I used to systematically reviewing the literature on race and teacher education. Following the methods section, I conclude the chapter with a discussion that builds on Milner’s (2008) theory of disruptive movement in teacher education by reengaging the literature in this review from a social movement standpoint to assess and theorize about the momentum of teacher education programs’ shift toward centering race in the preparation of teachers².

2.2 RACE AND RACISM

In this section, I draw primarily on the scholarship of race theorists (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Harris, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2014) to contextualize and define race and racism. I agree with Pollock and her colleagues (2010), who argued, understanding race and racism, for teachers, precedes the development of race-centered practices. Leonardo (2013) asserted, “no race, no racism” (p. 153),

² There are numerous teacher education program models, but the research in this review focuses almost entirely on traditional programs. Traditional teacher education programs are university-sponsored models that integrate coursework with supervised clinical work by drawing on pedagogical theories (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Although non-traditional programs, such as online, hybrid, or fast-track models are becoming more common, the majority of teachers are still prepared in traditional teacher education programs (Zeichner, 2017). I want to make a distinction here between *teacher education programs* and *teacher educators*. Typically, when I discuss teacher education programs in this chapter, I am referring to policies or institutional initiatives, whereas, when I discuss teacher educators, I am referring to particular curricular decisions and instructional practices. Finally, my use of the term “teacher” in this chapter always refers to pre-service teachers.

stressing that racism is dependent on the salience or meaning of race. Similarly, I argue that race-centered teaching practices are dependent on understanding race and racism as inter-related concepts. Therefore, it is appropriate to discuss race and racism at the outset of this review. The purpose of this section is not to theorize about race or use race as an analytic tool; instead, to support the broader aim of this chapter, this section focuses on defining the concepts of race and racism, while providing a contextual backdrop.

2.2.1 Defining Race

Race is socially, historically, physically (not biologically) and legally constructed (Milner, 2015) to symbolize conflicts and interests among different types of human bodies for the purpose of developing a social system that assigns privileges according to group membership (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Harris, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2014). Put simply, *race is an invented concept used as a tool for the purposes of racializing groups of people and building a racialized social system*. First, I address the racialization process by drawing on Omi and Winant (2014):

“Making up people” is both basic and ubiquitous. As social beings, we must categorize people so as to be able to “navigate” in the world—to discern quickly who may be friend or foe, to position and situate ourselves within prevailing social hierarchies, and to provide clues that guide our social interactions with the individuals and groups we encounter. (p. 105)

Essentially, to racialize a group of people according to attributes or characteristics goes beyond the typical sense-making process of grouping ideas or objects. Rather, as Omi and Winant

established, the racialization process³ was less about categorizing people and more about rationalizing the subordination of and enslavement of non-White people by using race as a tool to fabricate racial identity.

A racialized social system in the U.S. emerged from the European colonial project during the 15th and 16th centuries by extending the racialization process through the conquest of property (Bonilla-Silva, 2014)⁴. The emergent racialized social system, Bonilla-Silva argued, awarded “systemic privileges to Europeans (the people who became ‘White’) over non-Europeans (the people who became ‘non-White’)” (p. 9). Europeans further developed a racialized social system in the U.S. by providing clearer distinctions of power and privilege via the shift from simply being White toward Whiteness as a central component for property acquisition. To be clear, property, in the context of a racialized social system, refers to land, objects, including racialized groups of people, and the value associated with Whiteness (Harris, 1993).

Harris (1993) outlined the property functions of Whiteness in the context of a racialized social system. First, she argued that Whiteness could be considered an inalienable form of personal property. That is to say, the benefits associated with Whiteness as property cannot be taken, bought or sold; thus, entitlements of Whiteness are interminable. Second, Harris noted the right to use and enjoyment of Whiteness. In other words, Whiteness can be both enjoyed passively and used as a resource to exercise power. Take, for instance, defendants in multiple

³ Omi and Winant (2014) further explain the racialization process as being linked to European explorers’ first contact with non-White indigenous people. European explorers argued God justified them in using oppressive practices, such as enslavement and denial of rights, because non-White indigenous people were soulless, non-human, and “different” (e.g. skin color, physical build, cultural practices, and linguistic practices). As Omi and Winant (2009) noted, “The expropriation of property, the denial of political rights, the introduction of slavery and other forms of coercive labor, as well as outright extermination, all presupposed a worldview which distinguished Europeans—children of God, human beings, etc.—from others” (p. 4). To substantiate both the racialization process and the European-centered worldview of dominance, scientists attempted to develop biological evidence supporting and rationalizing White dominance (Omi & Winant, 2014). However, both early religious and scientific explanations of racial differences have been widely discredited (Nakkula & Toshalis, 2006). Still, it is important to recognize that a part of the European colonial project was to use race as tool to first fabricate racial identity (racialization) for the purpose of building a racialized social system to facilitate the expansion of property ownership and a social system of oppression, racism, and inequity.

⁴ On the matter of racialization, the debate on whether or not the 15th century is a marker of the emergence of race and racism is addressed in Bonilla-Silva’s (2014, 21-22n56) work. To summarize, he argued that imperialism and previous forms of discrimination were conflated with xenophobia and ethnocentrism. Moreover, Bonilla-Silva specifically contends that “race and racism” in Greek and Roman civilizations are mischaracterization.

murder cases; White defendants are almost 2.5 times less likely to receive the death penalty than Black defendants (Radelet & Pierce, 1991). One could argue that White defendants benefit from Whiteness by receiving less harsh sentences than Black defendants for similar crimes. Thirdly, Harris established that Whiteness embodies a public reputation and status that sits atop of the racial hierarchy. In particular, a reputation and status associated with personhood, Whiteness is indicative of self-ownership, income, and property. In an educational context, when schools with a majority White student population become more racial diverse, a school may be seen as losing its reputation (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Thus, following *Brown*, the mass exodus of White families from urban schools to suburban communities (Clotfelter, 2006) could be interpreted as an attempt for White families to ensure that their children continued attending schools with a “better” reputation, as determined by a lower Black student enrollment. Finally, Harris claimed that with Whiteness came the absolute right for White people to exclude “others” and to protect the inherent privileges for themselves and other in-group members.

2.2.2 Defining Racism

If race is an invented concept used as a tool to racialize groups of people for the purposes of building a racialized social system, then *racism is a set of unchallenged beliefs, practices, and systems that use power to maintain dominance in a racialized social system*. Certainly, as scholars have argued (Feagin, 2014; McIntosh, 2008), unchallenged beliefs and practices that mask racial inequity become normalized to the degree that a distorted perception of race can be transformed into racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Feagin, 2014; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2013a). While racism can occur intentionally or unintentionally, at its core is the use of power and privilege directed toward racialized groups and people through policies and discursive

practices (Carter, 2007). Much like the ever-changing concept of race, the ways in which racism manifests have also shifted over time. Still, regardless of how racism presents itself, what has remained constant, I argue, is that racism protects Whiteness.

In the U.S., racism has manifested in at least two widely accepted phases, occurring before and after the passage of Civil Rights legislation in the 1960s. Perhaps most synonymous with racism was the legal establishment of slavery between the 1600s and the mid-1800s, which saw roughly 8 million Africans forced into slavery, while an estimated 30-50 million died in transport to the Americas during slave trades (Feagin, 2014). Similarly, much has been written about Jim Crow racism, from about the 1800s to the 1960s, which maintained a racialized social system in the U.S. through segregationist policies and practices.⁵ From a historical standpoint, White people have kept people of color “in their place” by using racial domination and social control tactics, such as sanctioned physical violence on Black bodies and legislation to minimize interracial contact. Although exact historical time points related to policies and social movements around racism could certainly be debated, my point is to illustrate both the ways in which racism has manifested and how people may mischaracterize how racism presently operates.

Research has described the present era of racism as the era of colorblind racism, which relies on an assumption of equal opportunity. With the assumption of equal opportunity associated with Civil Rights legislation, race scholars argue that racism exists, more subtly, through institutional practices. Particularly, it has been noted that state agencies subsumed the

⁵ At the heart of segregationist policies and practices was White privilege and the idea that Whiteness was worthy of being protected, as Harris (1993) and others have argued. Maintaining a racialized social system was upheld through various systems in society. For example, shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court, in 1896, legally sanctioned segregation (see *Plessy v. Ferguson*). The Jim Crow era of racism centered on discriminatory practices in employment opportunities (Drake & Cayton, 1962), government funded assistance policies (Anyon, 2014), and housing (Gotham, 2000; Rothstein, 2015). Relevant for this chapter is the role of racism in education. While educational gaps between Black and White students have been tied to issues of access, such as denying educational rights, researchers recognize the unintended consequences of the political decision to desegregate schools (Bell, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2004). In the context of this review, it is important to acknowledge that desegregation of schools did not eradicate the belief that White people were superior to Black people. In fact, the response to desegregation, that is White flight, has been well documented (Clotfelter, 2006).

responsibility for maintaining racial dominance (Marable, 2015). To maintain a racialized social system in which elements of social control manifest through covert and, perhaps, indecipherable accounts of racism, a dominant racial ideology must exist. Bonilla-Silva (2014) defined a racial ideology as “the racially based frameworks used by actors to explain and justify (dominant race) or challenge (subordinate race or races) the racial status quo” (p. 9).

In other words, the persistence of racism requires an interpretive framework for making sense of various issues related to race. One example of a racially based framework is Feagin’s (2014) White Racial Frame, described as an inter-woven set of beliefs, feelings, attitudes, images and stories defending the racial domination of people of color. Feagin, a White male sociologist established that a White Racial Frame centered on maintaining White dominance through encouraging anti-Black attitudes and feelings among Whites, which has been achieved using images and narratives, such as criminalizing Black men or sexualizing Black women, to shape society’s beliefs, feelings, and discourses.

While Feagin’s (2014) framework can help to understand the conceptual nature of a White-centered worldview, Bonilla-Silva’s (2014) Colorblind Racism Framework provides four tenets that capture the ways in which racism may be operationalized, as I summarize next with examples (p. 76-77):

- Abstract Liberalism- combines ideas from political liberalism (such as equal opportunity) and economic liberalism (such as choice or individualism) to explain racial matters. For example, one might say, “I think racism is wrong, but I oppose programs, such as affirmative action, that may offer preferential treatment based on race because that would not be fair.”

- Naturalization- explains racial matters as “naturally occurring” or “that’s just the way it is.” For example, one might say, “Students in classes, in the cafeteria, or in the corridors of schools will ‘naturally’ self-segregate because people inherently want to be around others who are similar to them.”
- Cultural racism- identifies a person’s or a group’s response to a condition, such as poverty, and tries to label the response as a cultural trait or practice. Payne (2005), for instance, claimed there are hidden rules for poverty, rationalizing a need for teachers to remediate students living at or below the poverty line. One might say, “It is a cultural thing. Poor students are not taught proper language and communication patterns by their families.”
- Minimization of racism- suggests discrimination today is no longer an issue. For example, one might say, “People of color have it much better today, so I don’t think this happened because of his race.”

The four aforementioned tenets of the Colorblind Racism Framework describe the ways in which racism manifests in the present U.S. context, and they stem from a belief in equality of opportunity. That is, enacting colorblind racism is grounded in the assumption that people (of color) have complete control over their social and economic positions in society. This means that White people can explain and justify their positions in society by highlighting their hard work and efforts in achieving success, while choosing to opt out of or explaining away issues of racial inequity and placing the burden of race on “others.” In my assessment, much of the broader discourse around race today appears to be grounded in political rhetoric that stresses “American ideals,” rather than focusing on the numerous ways that much of society continues to operate from a “raced” orientation that I believe often goes unnoticed.

In building on the significance of race and racism, I sought to further explore what is known about *how* to prepare teachers to center race in their practices. The framing question for my systematic review is: “What themes emerge from the literature focused on race and teacher education?”

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

I began conducting this systematic review of literature by searching for peer-reviewed articles published after 1954. My initial reasoning was that desegregation vis-à-vis *Brown v. Board of Education* was a pivotal moment and opportunity for teachers to access knowledge about race. As I came to learn later through my review, the authors of a recent article in *Review of Research in Education* shared these same methodological considerations but different research questions (Brown, Bloome, Morris, Power-Carter & Willis, 2017). I focused my review on teacher education literature, which I searched for in EBSCO, using the Education Research Information Center (ERIC), the U.S. Department of Education’s database for educational research and Academic Search Premier.

In my initial search, I used combinations of the following terms: *teacher education*, *teacher education curriculum*, *teacher education programs*, and *race*. My initial search yielded 236 articles. By excluding articles that were focused outside the U.S. context or focused on international student populations, I reduced the total number of articles to 140. Next, I excluded publications that either focused on K-12 student populations or did not explicitly name implications for teacher education. During my screening process I found that race was sometimes used interchangeably with diversity and culture (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Sleeter, 2001). I

considered beginning another phase of reviewing articles that may have used diversity or culture, but I decided to maintain my original focus on “race” for two reasons. First, scholars have argued, conflating race with culture or diversity may be interpreted as a color-blind approach (Milner, 2012). Second, because race has been a central component of privilege and social stratification (Bonilla-Silva, 2014), I held on to “race.” In contemplating the inclusion of culture or diversity as stand-ins for “race,” I also reflected on my initial assumption of what it meant to be “race-centered.” So, while I recognize that other scholarship related to race and teacher education could have emerged using alternative key words, I decided against substituting culture or diversity for race. In all, I reviewed 90 articles.

I want to provide clarity on “analytic approach” and “analytic technique,” as described by Onweugbuzie and Frels (2016) as it relates to reviewing literature. Analytic approach describes a macro-level decision. For example, literature reviewers who are interested in a comprehensive understanding of the impact of a reading intervention might consider using a meta-analytic approach. Accordingly, the reviewer would search and analyze relevant studies that reported outcomes based on the reading intervention of interest. After running tests on the outcome data reported in each article, the literature reviewer would conclude the meta-analysis with an overall estimated impact of the reading intervention of interest. Different from analytic approaches, analytic techniques can be understood as micro-level decisions literature reviewers make to search, collect, code or analyze data. Literature reviewers use analytic techniques according to the analytic approach they select. Whereas analytic approaches are whole systems of analyses linked to nature of inquiry and research design, analytic techniques are specific practices researchers use to make sense of the unit of analysis, which might be a facet of an article, such as methodological approach, or a summary of the entire article.

For this review, I used a constant comparative analysis approach because I inductively approached the literature posing the open-ended exploratory question, “what is known about how teacher education programs prepare teachers to engage in race-centered practices?” The constant comparative analysis is a five-step process for “systematically reducing sources to codes inductively, then developing themes from the codes.” (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016; p. 229). Within my constant comparative analysis approach, I used several analytic techniques after I imported the final articles’ information into an Excel spreadsheet with four columns. In the first column at the far left of my spreadsheet I listed the citation. In the column to the right, I added the articles’ abstracts. I used the third and fourth columns for notes and codes.

Before analyzing articles, I prepared by engaging in two organizational techniques. The first organizational technique I used was abstract screening. By screening every article’s abstract, I got a general sense of each article’s broader focus, which was helpful for grouping articles according to similar characteristics I observed. For instance, Kohli (2009) and Matias (2013) both highlighted race-centered teacher educator practices, so I grouped them together. Again, I want to stress that screening abstracts is an organizational technique and not an analytic technique. The second organizational technique I used was summary development. After reading each article, I developed a brief summary, which populated the third column of my spreadsheet. To illustrate, after reading Austin (2009), I noted, “author argued that teacher educators must recognize contradictions in the teacher education discourse and support critical reflection on institutionalized approaches that deemphasize race.” It is important to note that my objective, as literature reviewer, was to extract the most pertinent information from each article that could answer my question “What themes emerge from the literature focused on race and teacher

education?” In other words, each summary I developed represented my interpretation of the most salient and relevant points from each article. Thus, my summaries were my units of analyses.

Techniques that are commonly used for analyzing empirical data can also be practical for coding and analyzing summaries or syntheses related to the information or data that a literature reviewer mines from articles (Onwuegbuzie, Leech & Collins, 2012). Therefore, I used analytic techniques described by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2013) as in-vivo coding (using words verbatim) and open coding (first pass noticing of summaries) to label each of my summaries with a code. For instance, in the above example, I labeled my summary of Austin’s (2009) article as “modeling resistance to teacher education.” As I continued reviewing my codes, I compared and combined where possible, such as combining “tensions in race-centered courses” and “challenges with race-centered curriculum. Finally, I clustered sub-themes into overarching themes and constructed a conceptual map to guide my presentation of emergent findings.

2.4 FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS: EMERGENT THEMES FROM THE LITERATURE ON RACE AND TEACHER EDUCATION

My goal was to explore what themes emerged from the literature on race and teacher education program. In this section, I present three overarching themes that emerged from my review of 90 articles. The first theme, *Structural Shifts Toward Race in Teacher Education*, describes a historical account of race in teacher education. The increasing prevalence of race in teacher education, as evidenced by the growing number of publications, suggests there have been some attempts to better prepare teachers to engage race. Figure 4 suggests that from 1965 to 2008, race was almost non-existent in the teacher education literature. With only about 1 publication per

year, one could argue that centering race in teacher education programs was not a priority. If teacher education programs were addressing race in the preparation of teachers, it is possible that it was not a central research focus. By contrast, publications on race in teacher education programs tripled after 2008.

One obvious possibility for the shift toward race in teacher education literature could be the election of President Obama. While this is purely a conjecture, it has been argued elsewhere that the ascendancy of the first Black president spurred national debates about both the end of

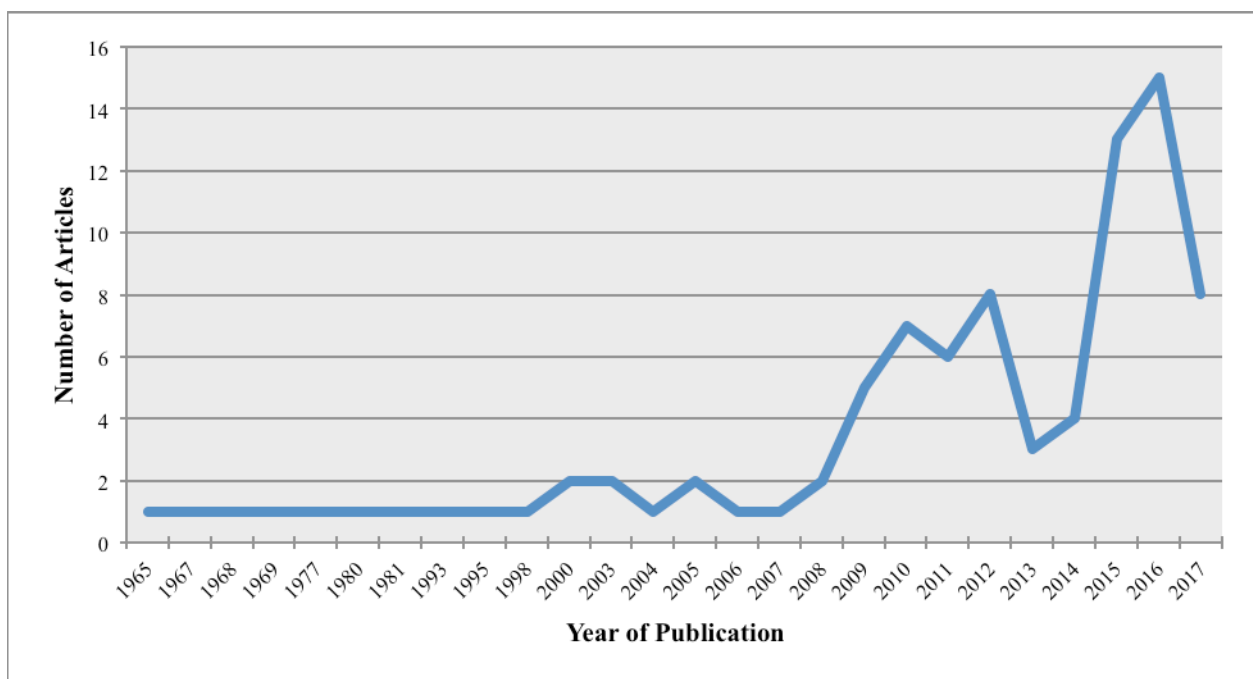


Figure 4. Distribution of articles on race and teacher education by year of publication. This figure illustrates a significant change in the number of publications on race and teacher education after 2009. This figure could also suggest that the presence of race via teacher education coursework, dialogues, or institutional policies became much more prominent in 2009.

racism as well and the beginning of open race talks (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Notwithstanding, the increasing presence of race in teacher education programs has raised concerns among researchers. In essence, researchers have argued that opportunities for teachers to learn about race have been minimal (USCCR, 1968), rooted in deficit thinking (D'Amico, 2016) and over-emphasizing Whiteness and, perhaps, colorblindness (Sleeter, 2017). While the growing

presence of race in teacher education programs can be seen as progress, the growth also points to potential ways to reshape future teacher education programs to better prepare teachers to engage in race-centered practices.

The second emergent theme, *Race-related Curriculum Design*, highlights a body of literature that discusses the importance of addressing teacher tensions with race in classroom settings (Pollock et al, 2010), promoting teacher reflection (Milner, 2003), and incorporating curricular interventions for teaching about race (King, 2016). Essentially, the body of literature in the second emergent theme captures “what” teacher education programs do to prepare teachers to engage race. The third emergent theme, *Pedagogical Practices that Foreground Race*, describes “how” teacher education programs prepare teachers to engage race, particularly through modeling race-centered practices (Austin, 2009; Blanchett & Wynne, 2007; Philip, 2012; Warren & Hotchkins, 2015) and using race-related theories to inform teachers’ practices (Matias & Liou, 2015; Matias & Mackey, 2016).

2.4.1 Structural Shifts Toward Race in Teacher Education

Very few structural shifts toward race in teacher education have been documented in the literature. By structural shifts, I am referring to macro-level policy decisions to implement large scale changes. For example, multicultural education and culturally relevant education are two widely accepted movements that have been adopted in teacher education programs across the country. Unlike the inclusion of culture as a central component in preparing teachers for diverse contexts, race, for the most part, has been excluded from traditional teacher education programs. Only one article in this review described a structural shift toward race in teacher education that fell into a category of its own. The Putney Graduate School of Teacher Education (1950-1964)

was said to have centered on helping teachers care about issues of race, social justice, and environmental sustainability (Rodgers, 2006). Through 11 interviews with alumni, Rodgers learned that the teacher education program included experiences and projects meant to intentionally have teachers confront and engage in meaningful dialogues with each other about how to address social issues. In the remainder of this section, I highlight 14 articles that address structural shifts toward race in teacher education programs.

2.4.1.1 Post-desegregation approaches to teaching about race in teacher education

Following desegregation, teacher education programs provided teachers with no support (Rainbow & Cooper, 1980) or limited support (USCCR, 1968). Studies also showed how teacher education programs, following desegregation, operated from a deficit-oriented approach toward students of color.

For instance, D’Amico (2016) reported on teacher education programs in New York, during 1960-1986. She found that teacher education programs depended on the Moynihan Report and Coleman Report as sources for preparing teachers. The reports argued students of color were culturally deprived and deviant. She explained, “This brand of teacher preparation armed future teachers with a perception of children of color as troubled and their parents as violent” (p. 552). While a shift toward race in New York teacher education programs could be seen as progress, D’Amico pointed out the consequences of influencing teacher beliefs about race. In fact, what she found was that prior to the 1968 teacher strike in New York, one of the most salient demands centered on teachers’ beliefs and discontent with working with children and families of color.

In another example of how teacher education programs can draw on deficit oriented instructional practices to prepare teachers, Harty and Mahan (1977) examined 159 pre-service teachers in 4 different teacher education programs across three semesters to identify the “effect”

of the program on student teachers' beliefs. Each group of pre-service teachers worked in a school with a different racially homogenous student population. According to pre/post surveys, all groups of teachers showed significant shifts in their beliefs in schooling from progressive to more traditional. While the authors do not define "traditional" or "progressive," it is likely they are drawing on political ideologies to characterize teacher beliefs. However, the point is that the teacher education programs shifted teachers' beliefs. The data showed that the pre-service teachers' shifts in beliefs became more closely aligned with the supervising teachers' beliefs after 3 semesters; and, perhaps most compelling was the fact that the largest shift in beliefs occurred among the pre-service teachers who worked in schools with a majority Black student population.

Only a few studies following desegregation emerged describing research on teacher education programs. The findings suggest teacher education programs provided limited support for teachers working in newly desegregated schools. The support teacher education programs did provide, according to studies here, suggested that curriculum and instructional practices may have supported what some teachers believed about students of color or may have negatively shifted teachers' beliefs.

2.4.1.2 Centering on Whiteness in teacher education

The second structural shift toward race represents a newer phase of teacher education, one that departs from a deficit framework to one that centers on Whiteness (Sleeter, 2017). By centering on Whiteness, using Harris's (1993) description, I mean that teacher education programs incorporate race by maintaining a reputation of not being too race-focused. Sleeter (2017) addressed the persistent gap between the professed visions of teacher education programs to prepare teachers for racial diversity and the unchanging number of mostly White teachers feeling

unprepared to engage race or work in schools with large populations of Black and Latino students. From Harris's perspective, teacher education programs can purport to address race without having to lose their reputations. Despite good intentions in attempting to address race, Milner and Laughter (2015) stressed that teachers struggle with thinking and talking about the role that race plays. This could mean that, rather than intensifying the role of race in the curriculum, teacher education programs can provide some teaching about race without the concern of teachers dropping out due to teachers discomfort with race.

The literature also suggests that teacher education programs exercise the use and enjoyment of Whiteness (Harris, 1993) by implementing a colorblind curriculum. For example, Pimentel (2010) found that when race is discussed in teacher education programs it often underemphasizes White privilege. That is to say, the topic of race may only be discussed in a context of overt racism instead of in a context that recognizes other ways that permit privilege and marginalization, such as through discursive practices. Similarly, Watson (2012) reported that teachers and teacher educators talk about race without using "race words;" instead they rely on coded terms, such as "urban," "diverse" or "students who don't look like me" (p. 998). What the literature infers here is that there may be an institutional culture within some teacher education programs that normalizes color-blind practices. As Harris noted, Whiteness can be deployed, such as influencing policy decisions about how and the degree to which race is implemented, and passively enjoyed, as in the case of teacher education programs not monitoring or holding instructors accountable for actually examining race, power and privilege (Allen, Hancock, Lewis & Starker-Glass, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1999).

The literature draws attention to the way in which teacher education programs center on Whiteness through the absolute exclusion of the needs of teachers of color. As Harris (1993)

explained, Whiteness entitles its owners the right to exclude those who are “non-White.” Although centering Whiteness by excluding teachers of color may be unintentional, the fact is that the exclusion people of color mirrors previous phases of racism in the U.S. To illustrate, Cook (2013) noted, “Many teacher education programs reinforce and reify the very systems of White supremacy and ethnocentrism that they purport to prepare teachers to resist” (p. 46). Building on Cook’s argument, Kraehe (2015) added that the effort to prepare pre-service teachers should not be monopolized by White teachers’ needs. In one particular teacher education program, Kraehe discovered a protocol for investigating race and building racial knowledge was excluded from the curriculum. Accordingly, she recalled how two Black pre-service teachers “broke the code of racial silence” by openly discussing their race-related experiences. While there are connections that can be made to the insignificance that teacher education programs make of race and Black pre-service teachers (Milner, Pearman & McGee, 2013), the literature in this section exposes the presence of Whiteness in teacher education.

2.4.1.3 Summary

Along with other studies (Lam, 2015; Matias, Montoya & Nishi, 2016), the literature in this section illustrates how teacher education programs have attempted to make shifts toward race. The body of literature in this first emergent theme elucidates both the efforts teacher education programs have made as well as areas for teacher education programs to consider as race continues to grow in prevalence. While more recent research demonstrates that teacher education, in its present structural form, has attempted to go further by integrating strategic insights for helping teachers develop an understanding of race, these attempts have been shown to center on Whiteness (Allen et al, 2017; Kraehe, 2015; Pimentel, 2010; Sleeter, 2017; Watson, 2012). Finally, this section sheds light on how large scale structural shifts in teacher education

programs can influence teachers' thinking and, ultimately, their development of practices that center race.

2.4.2 Components of a Strategically Designed Race-Related Curriculum

A second emergent theme from the literature illustrates how teacher education programs prepare teachers to engage in race-centered practices using a strategically designed race-related curriculum. Au (2012) explained, "The curriculum can be conceived of as the tool that structures the accessibility of knowledge" (p. 49). Therefore, the teacher education curriculum might be seen as a plan for prioritizing which knowledge (including knowledge about race) teachers can access and the structure of how knowledge is presented. Researchers have rightfully characterized the teacher education curriculum as a racial text (Cochran-Smith, 2000) and even a race-neutral, color-blind cultural script designed to maintain White supremacy (Ladson-Billings, 1998). The body of literature in this section draws on 32 articles that characterize three components of a race-related teacher education curriculum: (a) promoting teacher reflection, (b) addressing common teacher tensions with race, and (c) incorporating curricular interventions that encourage race-engagement.

2.4.2.1 Promoting teacher reflection on race

The literature suggests that teacher reflection is one core component of a race-related curriculum. The research has established that engaging in reflection on race is a skill that teachers must develop to better understand themselves as racial beings in a shared social context with students who may have varying experiences and racial identities (Boyd & Glazier, 2017; Milner, 2003; Taylor, 2017). Importantly, teachers may need guidance through the process of reflecting on the

experiences from which they draw to make sense of race (e.g., study abroad programs; stories they have heard). Milner (2003) described *race reflection*, which I briefly summarize, as a process for teachers to:

- Uncover inconspicuous beliefs, perceptions and experiences, especially where race is concerned
- Understand hidden values, dispositions, biases and beliefs
- Pursue knowledge of self and others
- Strengthen reflexive skills
- Interpret experiential knowledge
- Cultivate meaningful racial discourse

What is clear is that race-reflection, as Milner described, is an active process through which a teacher deconstructs and interprets conceptions of race to make meaning of prior experiences. As literature in the previous section argued, teachers struggle with talking about race, which suggests that guiding teachers through the intensive practice of race-reflection may be necessary.

In fact, researchers maintain that teachers seldom think and talk critically about race as a regular practice, perhaps discouraging teachers' willingness to employ reflective practices on their own. In one study, Boyd and Glazier (2017) conducted four focus groups with 23 teachers over the course of a single year to get a sense of how they responded to controversial topics. When topics of race emerged, the researchers found that the teachers evaded uncomfortable talks with each other and instead engaged in what Boyd and Glazier termed "choreographed conversations." They documented how, rather than engaging in reflective and critical discourses to expand each other's understanding of race, teachers engaged in comfortable collaborations. That is, without guidance or facilitation, this study suggests teachers may avoid race-reflective

practices. Similar findings have emerged in older studies. Take Grant (1981), for instance, who found teachers tended to demonstrate a concern for racial diversity only when a facilitator led them. Grant's findings would support the claim that teachers should be guided through reflective opportunities to support their autonomous pursuits toward reflection and a better understanding race.

A race-related curriculum that promotes teacher reflection not only provides opportunities to practice reflection but it also establishes that critical reflection is a regular teacher practice. Pollock, Bocala, Deckman and Dickstein-Staub (2016) submitted that, to the degree that teachers perceive the inclusion of race or reflection in their work as insurmountable or "extra," they may have difficulties teaching well in racially diverse school contexts. They contend that reflection is critical for teachers to transcend challenges with race in their practices. Pollock and her colleagues suggested 3 ways to counter the misperception that reflecting on race is outside of teachers' pedagogical purview. First, they argued, teachers should be reassured that no perfect moves exist, and bringing race into the classroom contributes to a broader movement toward equity. This means, a race-related curriculum intentionally plans to support teachers in small efforts to be reflective, while continually reminding teachers of the way in which their individual practices promote equity.

Second, Pollock and her colleagues (2016) posited that teachers must be guided through conversations that can shed light on how race intersects with other identities. The purpose for these nuanced discussions, they argue, is to encourage teachers to think and learn about the particularistic experiences of each of their students. In the same way Milner (2003) suggested race reflection can help to uncover inconspicuous beliefs about students, Pollock and her colleagues asserted that guiding reflective teacher talks about students' intersecting identities

should be seen as a regular practice. Third, Pollock and her colleagues acknowledge that teachers must see how to embed race talk and reflection in any classroom scenario, especially when there are opportunities to address relevant social issues. In other words, a race-related curriculum promotes teacher reflection by providing teachers with real examples of what race talk and reflection looks like in practice and not by simply providing tools and strategies.

Building on the literature I have presented thus far, I highlight a few approaches researchers have documented for teacher educators to facilitate teacher reflection. For instance, to assist teacher educators in facilitating reflection, Milner (2003) and Mason (2016) suggested the use of journaling and critically engaged dialogue as means to build self-reflective skills. Moreover, Milner provided guiding questions, such as “how will my race influence my work as a teacher with students of color,” or “how do I situate my students’ knowledge, experience, expertise and race with my own? These questions are designed for teachers to imagine interactions with their future students. What’s more, these imaginings may create points of entry for teacher educators to assess where their teachers are in the process of building race-centered practices. Using an auto-ethnography was another approach to facilitate teacher reflection. Hughes (2008) offered five competencies to guide teachers in developing their reflective skills. More clearly, teachers can be guided through: a) creating narratives that center on their experiences with race, b) generating questions about race and investigating the literature, c) working in small groups to give and receive feedback about their narratives, d) triangulating others’ narratives to disconfirm personal competing evidence and e) sharing stories in a public forum. It should be noted here that journaling, dialogue and auto-ethnography are only a few ways to promote teacher reflection; and, I would add, there are virtually no limits on the approaches a race-related curriculum can include to promote teacher reflection.

The central premise here, according to what the research in this section has demonstrated, is that promoting teacher reflection can be considered a core component of a race-related curriculum. By targeting particular aspects of race-reflection (Milner, 2003) and highlighting race-reflection as an embedded component (Pollock et al, 2016), teacher education programs can normalize reflection as an approach to encourage teachers to develop the autonomy to be reflective beyond their preparation programs (Grant, 1981). These articles also illustrated a few approaches to facilitate teacher reflection (Mason, 2016; Taylor, 2017).

2.4.2.2 Addressing teacher tensions with learning about race

As a second core component, the literature stressed that a race-related curriculum strategically plans for teacher tensions, challenges, fears, and discomfort. In a previous section, I discussed how race and racism have and continue to operate in ways that marginalize many people of color; thus, it makes sense that teachers may struggle with discussing race. However, the assumptions in the present phase of color-blind racism contribute to teachers' struggle with race by rationalizing teachers' avoidance and minimization of race in the name of individualism and choice (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). In other words, teachers may choose to exercise their right to opt out of talking about race if they believe race is inconsequential to their practice or if they feel uncomfortable. The literature in this section highlights common teacher tensions (Brown & Brown, 2012; Gay & Howard, 2000; Pollock et al, 2010).

As race has emerged in teacher education curriculum, so too have teacher tensions. Gay and Howard (2000) identified 2 common tensions teacher educators encounter when trying to build teachers knowledge and understanding of race. Gay and Howard found that teachers expressed fears of engaging students of color around multicultural content, not having enough time to teach their content material, and the potential for making mistakes that may offend

students. The other common barrier Gay and Howard described was resistance. In other words, teachers actively try to avoid discussing race by rationalizing that people are more alike than different or that there are more differences within groups than among groups. Other researchers have added that some teachers believe that it is inappropriate to talk about race with students in class (Brown & Brown, 2012). The tensions described here, fear, resistance and avoidance, tie into the new framework described by Bonilla-Silva (2014), which supports colorblindness. What is compelling, though, is that fear, resistance and avoidance, are not new issues for teachers.

For instance, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1968) conducted a case study of Syracuse, New York to understand new teachers' experiences working with students of color following desegregation. The report explained that interviews revealed, "teachers, mostly White, were frequently unprepared, indeed, reluctant, to deal with racial problems. Many staff members lacked knowledge about racial problems and consequently were unable to cope with situations in desegregated classrooms" (p. 12). It can be argued that, because the tensions teachers would experience after desegregation were unknown, designing a race-related curriculum to address tensions was not possible. The teacher education program in Syracuse, according to the USCCR report, consisted of a 2-week voluntary workshop with no structured curriculum. Another case study of a "White" and a "Black" university in the southern U.S., following desegregation, found that teacher education programs at "White universities" implemented virtually no changes in their curriculum design to address race. The case studies presented here provide counter-examples of a race-related curriculum.

Two studies demonstrated how addressing teacher tensions with race could be essential for understanding students' identities. In one study of 141 teachers' attitudes and understandings about language diversity, Cho, Rios, Trent and Mayfield (2012) admitted that teacher attitudes

and understandings about language diversity were connected to their beliefs about and unaddressed tensions with race. To this point, Lew (2012) added that teacher education programs seeking to be responsive to the increases in immigrant student population must be willing to examine the broader meaning and significance of race both in the classroom and society at large. In terms of addressing tensions with race, both authors suggest that addressing tensions with race may provide clarity in teachers' beliefs about students' various identity features, such as language.

In contrast to the previous studies, researchers have designed curriculum to strategically address common tensions with race. Pollock, Deckman, Mira and Shalaby (2010) acknowledged that strategically designing race-centered curriculum to confront tensions was essential. Through analyzing 65 pre-service teacher journals and observational field notes over a two-year span in a course on entitled Everyday Anti-Racism (EAR) course, Pollock and her colleagues named three tensions that pre-service teachers often grapple with around a central question, "But what can I do?" Below, I summarize their recommendations:

- Teachers routinely search for concrete, actionable steps they can take in their classrooms and schools, questioning how abstract ideas or theories about racial inequality and difference can help them.
- Teachers routinely question the power of the individual educator to counteract structural or societal problems of racial and race-class inequality via the classroom.
- Each teacher routinely questions his or her own personal readiness to become the type of professional who can successfully engage issues of race and racism in his or her life and classroom practice.

Accordingly, designing a race-related curriculum requires addressing common tensions teachers may have with their role in rejecting racism. The fundamental idea presented in the literature is that a race-related curriculum must be explicit about common tensions, whether it is fear, discomfort, or how best to implement anti-racist practices. Moreover, by addressing tensions up front and regularly, a race-related curriculum can reshape how teachers think and talk about race.

As a second core component of a race-related curriculum, this section highlighted common tensions with which teachers grapple when learning about race. This section also provided examples and counter-examples of race-related curriculum design for helping teachers navigate such tensions. According to this research, when researchers and teacher educators are teaching about multiple identity spaces, such as language diversity, a race-related curriculum may enhance teachers' understandings of their students many identity characteristics (Cho et al, 2012; Lew, 2012). Additionally, encouraging teachers to confront their struggles with race was shown to be essential supporting teachers' development of race-centered practices (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Pollock et al, 2010).

2.4.2.3 Curricular interventions for teaching about race

A third core component of a race-related curriculum that emerged from the research was incorporating curricular interventions that encourage race-engagement. In this context, curricular interventions describe literature, interactive games, and projects that promote discussion among teachers about race. What the literature suggests is that curricular interventions for teaching about race have become much more developed since *Brown*.

Curricular interventions for teaching about race emerged in the form of literature or diverse text materials. In 1965, for example, Brazziel noted that there were a small number of government-supported institutes encouraging teachers to include accurate accounts of Black

history in their work at newly desegregated schools. While Ether (1969) agreed with using a wider range of literature, he added that many teacher education programs only offered a single optional course on African American literature. Incorporating a broader literature base was seen as one approach to encourage teacher practices to be more race-centered. With the addition of literature, Davies (1967) stressed that teachers must also be prepared to learn how to confront issues, such as quality of schools, teacher morale, bureaucratization and racial tension. In essence, Davies was arguing for a sharper focus on making connections between literature and broader social realities. This connection Davies described shortly after *Brown* emerges in Ross's (2017) use of Maxine Greene's literature and King's (2016) focus on Black history, exemplifying the symbiotic relationship the text can have with race and justice.

Curricular interventions in a race-related curriculum take the shape of interactive games. For example, Jost and Whitfield (2005) used a modified interactive board game, Monopoly, as an entry point for discussing issues of race and equity with teachers. In the game, groups of teachers began playing at different times. Jost and Whitfield described how teachers made connections to starting earlier and winning the game. From these discussions, teachers were directed to make connections to advantages in opportunities in society. Over 3 years, Jost and Whitfield consistently reported that White pre-service teachers truly believed society was fair, they rejected the reality of racism, and they often admitted to never thinking about what it meant to be White. In this sense, Jost and Whitfield used an interactive game to generate a discussion that exposed issues of race, Whiteness and colorblindness.

Another curricular intervention that emerged from the research was service projects. Endo (2015) showed how 19 teacher education students working in an urban elementary school deepened their knowledge of race through participating a multicultural service-learning project.

Briefly, the project focused on building relationships with students in three ways that map onto prior research I presented. For example, Endo used: (a) small groups in a similar same way Hughes (2008) and Pollock and her colleagues (2016) did, (b) multicultural texts (Ross, 2014) with popular themes such as bullying, building friendships and diverse family structures, and (c) through making explicit connections between and among the texts, students' experiences (King, 2016) and state's curriculum standards.

2.4.2.4 Summary

In this section, I presented a second emergent theme from the literature that showed how teacher education programs prepare teachers to engage in race-centered practices using a strategically designed race-related curriculum. Moreover, within this body of literature, I discovered three core components of a race-related curriculum: (a) promoting teacher reflection on race, (b) addressing common teacher tensions with race, and (c) incorporating curricular interventions to teach about race. Essentially, this second body of literature indicated that using a race-related curriculum might help teachers to build race-centered instructional practices.

2.4.3 Pedagogical Practices That Foreground Race

Whereas the previous body of literature in the second emergent theme highlighted curriculum design, the third emergent theme from the literature addresses pedagogical practices. More specifically, the 44 articles in this section portray pedagogical practices that foreground race in two ways. One group of studies illustrated the ways in which teacher educators model race-centered practices. The second group of articles captured how race-related theories and frameworks inform teacher practices.

2.4.3.1 Modeling race-centered practices in teacher education

Several scholars describe how teacher educators model race-centered practices. I want to restate my proposition that race-centered practices are dependent on a firm understanding of race and racism in schools and society. Accordingly, this body of literature assumes that teacher educators have adopted a race-centered approach. Thus, the four race-centered teacher educator practices that emerged from the literature should not be seen as a list of practices that can be used without the prerequisite understanding of race and racism (Pollock, Bocala, Deckman and Dickstein-Staub, 2016).

The literature revealed that teacher educators model race-centered practices by joining and critiquing broader conversations that attempt to perpetuate racial inequalities (Blanchett & Wynne, 2007). That is, by standing at the forefront of national discourses around race and equity, teacher educators model race-centered practices. For instance, scholars have joined national conversations about police violence on unarmed Black bodies (Berry & Stovall, 2013; Hill, 2016; Milner, 2017). These studies suggest that teachers can learn from seeing their professors on the front lines fighting for equity and justice.

Second, teacher educators engage in race-centered practices through recognizing and confronting contradictions at the structural level (Austin, 2009). Moreover, Austin posited that teacher educators must learn to reject institutional practices that deemphasize race, especially in the context of colorblind teacher education programs. For example, she remarked, when institutional policies prioritize a democratic community, such as equality or fairness, they limit teachers' access to knowledge about the role that race plays. Similarly, others have recognized and confronted teacher education for underemphasizing race in the curriculum (Allen et al, 2017; Zion, Allen & Jean, 2016). Further, Matias (2013) brought attention to the contradictions that

occur in teacher education when she illustrated how White pre-service teachers maintain dominance through resisting teacher educators of color who talk about race. As she described, her fear is a result of the power her White students have to provide poor evaluations, which essentially may reflect poorly on Matias and, perhaps, other teacher educators of color who center race in their work.

A third way the literature described race-centered practices among teacher educators is through identifying and rejecting false empathy (Warren & Hotchkins, 2015). To borrow from Warren and Hotchkins, false empathy can be understood as the tendency for teachers to think, believe and act as if they have more empathy than what can be cultivated through interacting with a person or group to whom they are showing empathy. In other words, false empathy can be seen as dehumanizing because it suggests the empathizer already “knows;” thus, in a context of race-centeredness, false empathy can position the empathizer as color-blind. Delpit (2006) confirmed that cultural conflicts could arise when teachers refuse to understand their students’ ways of seeing the world. Warren and Hotchkins noted, “Teacher educators have the responsibility to equip teacher candidates with tools and a language to help them see how their interpretations of racial difference are shaded by their own racial identity” (p. 209).

Finally, the literature suggested that teacher educators model race-centered practices by pinpointing common critiques among pre-service teachers who claim to be race-conscious (Philip, 2012). The claim that Philip made was that teachers often enter teacher education programs with an uninformed orientation toward equity and fairness. While this orientation could stem from ideas of liberalism (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Feagin, 2014), this supposed race-conscious approach to equity could distort the ways in which teachers view racial matters in school spaces (Milner, 2012). Indeed, pre-service teachers may draw from an ideology that fails

to call out racism as a structural feature. Philip's dispute is that a false race-consciousness can bear weight on teachers' future practices. Kohli (2009) found that addressing elements of racism in both K-12 and teacher education experiences is one way to disrupt teachers' ideological critiques of equity. For this reason, Philip posited, teacher educators demonstrate race-centered practices when they recognize and dispel such common critiques as a way to help teachers better grasp the complexity of systemic racism.

2.4.3.2 Informing teachers' practices with race-related theories and frameworks

Research illustrates how teacher educators prepare teachers for engaging in race-centered practices by using race-related frameworks to analyze and inform teachers' practices. While it cannot be assumed that pre-service teachers enter preparation programs with no understanding of race, teacher educators may play a critical role in discerning where pre-service teachers are in the development process. Critical Race Theory, Critical Whiteness Studies, Funds of Knowledge, and Racial Literacy are race-related frameworks that emerged from the literature as analytic tools for making meaning of teachers' beliefs and practices regarding issues of race. This body of literature also includes a few studies that apply race-related frameworks in specific content areas, such as science, English language arts, social studies and the arts.

Studies highlighted Critical Race Theory and Critical Whiteness Studies as two frameworks that have guided teacher educators in locating their White pre-service teachers within a broader racialized hierarchy (Matias & Grosland, 2016; Matias & Liou, 2015; Matias & Mackey, 2016). One example of how teacher educators have applied Critical Whiteness Studies, for instance, is through analyzing pre-service teachers' digital stories (photo/video presentations that combine music and, oftentimes, voiceovers). Digital stories require teachers to recognize specific events or experiences in life as touch points. Matias and Grosland (2016) shared

exemplary models of digital stories that highlighted how Whiteness emerges even after participating in a teacher education course, centered on race. They described how White teachers in their sample demonstrated an emotional distance, removing themselves from the implications of race. Relatedly, they also found that White teachers often denied the presence of Whiteness. Equally notable was that teachers were shown to adopt positions of resistance to sharing the burden of race. What can be gleaned from this research is how teacher educators can use race-related frameworks to inform teachers' practices.

Research showed how incorporating race-related frameworks in teacher education has been linked to teachers' development of race-centered practices. To illustrate, teachers have reported drawing on the Funds of Knowledge Framework to improve their teaching practices, specifically with using critical questioning for a deeper understanding of their students and their students' families (Saathoff, 2015). Another example of teachers using race-related frameworks to inform practice draws on the application of Critical Race Theory. Young (2016) discovered that Critical Race Theory was essential for deepening teachers' understanding of race talk, especially as it related to language that marginalizes students of color. In a third example, Rodriguez (2011) documented how a Latina teacher customized her pedagogical approach by drawing on LatCrit theory to shape her bilingual instructional practices. Rodriguez emphasized how the teacher incorporated her own experiences to develop a teaching approach that centered on resistance and critiques of oppressive schooling. Together, these studies demonstrate how teachers can build their own unique race-related practices by applying race-related frameworks they learn in teacher education programs.

In this review, studies also highlighted racial literacy as a race-related framework used in teacher education programs for introducing and penetrating dense themes related to race.

Researchers typically build on Guinier's (2004) work, which describes racial literacy as the ability to decode the language that perpetuates structural racism. For instance, Joanou (2017) incorporated popular media with which teachers were familiar to provide pathways for initiating dialogues about how race and racism are embedded in everyday communications and texts. In fact, over the course of a semester, teachers' culminating projects, as well as Joanou's field notes, showed evidence that teachers came to be more deeply engaged in social issues, such as racism and hetero-normativity.

In specific content areas, such as social studies or science, race-related frameworks have provided a narrower focus for informing teachers' practices. Take the social studies context, for example. Busey (2016) advocated for racial media literacy in social studies, particularly to counter teachers' tendencies to remain neutral or silent about current events, such as elections, that are embedded with racial messages. With racial media literacy, Busey stressed the development of sociopolitical consciousness to encourage teachers to read, interpret, critique and discuss how knowledge is shared through media outlets. From a racial literacy perspective, Busey and Joanou (2017) posited that teachers must learn to recognize that the political act of ignoring racial messages, remaining neutral, or staying silent in conversations about race can contradict their students' interests.

In science classroom contexts, Philip, Olivares-Pasillas and Rocha (2016) used racial literacy as a framework for helping teachers to analyze data. Highlighting how STEM teachers learn to decode racial messages embedded in curricular materials, such as charts, graphs or infographics, was a central feature in developing race-centered practices in a science context. In a different case study, Larkin, Maloney and Perry-Rider's (2016) used a Critical Race Theory framework to explain science teachers' beliefs about race. The normalization of racism in

society, Larkin and colleagues argued, was evident in the participants' struggle with the idea that race was an influential factor in shaping people's realities. Additionally, they concluded that the degree to which science teachers develop an understanding of race, and, conceivably, race-centered practices could be influenced more by the strength of their original beliefs and not the quality of the program. Wallace and Brand (2012) showed counter-evidence, suggesting that a focus on racial inequity in teacher education did, in fact, enhance science teachers' instructional practices with respect to race and culture.

English Language Arts research suggested race-related frameworks might inform teachers' race-related practices (Skerrett, 2011). For instance, Price (2017) argued that using African American literature to teach about race helps teachers build racial literacy. Moreover, to encourage discussions related to the text, teachers were most successful when race was gradually introduced. As prior racial literacy research showed, this pedagogical approach could be useful for either initiating conversations about race or, as Mosley and Rogers (2011) suggested, exploring teachers' discursive practices to gauge their level of preparedness to discuss race. However, some argue, from a Critical Race Theory perspective, that avoiding race talk or introducing race "gradually" may be counter-productive for preparing English language arts teachers to engage in race-centered practices (Malsbary, 2014; Mitchell, 2012). That is, by not making race central, from a Critical Race Theory perspective, teachers and teacher educators may further marginalize students of color.

Other studies used race-related frameworks to inform the practices of teachers in the arts. Shieh (2016) incorporated racial discourse in music teacher education following the police killing of Eric Garner by centering on Black Radical Politics. He asked of music educators, "Where is the space in our classrooms for a radical politics of engagement with the current Black

Lives Matters movement” (p. 127). Shieh used elements of racial discourse to facilitate discussions about national issues of racial inequity. In a similar way, Chappell and Cahnman-Taylor (2013) centered race in their inquiry when they critiqued the disappearance of the arts as a result of over-standardization. They contended that such political moves were discounting the positive influence arts-based pedagogies have had on the school experiences of students of color. Both Shieh and Chappell and Cahnman-Taylor demonstrate how race-related frameworks can be used to problematize broader issues. Moreover, it is important to note that across content areas, the literature in this section demonstrates how teacher educators use race-related frameworks to inform teacher practices.

2.4.3.3 Summary

In this third emergent theme from the literature, studies illustrated pedagogical practices that foreground race. These studies suggested that when teacher educators model race-centered practices for teachers, they can support teachers’ understanding of race and teachers’ development of practices that center race. Also, through using race-related frameworks, teacher educators can critique teachers’ practices and help them develop instructional practices that disrupt rather than contribute to racial inequity and injustice.

2.5 DISCUSSION

There is a noticeable gap between the roles that teacher educators and institutions play in supporting teachers to build race-centered practices. Moreover, the research points to a need to more closely examine the interconnectedness between and among teacher educators and

institutional practices. While teacher education programs have made efforts to prepare teachers for race-centered practices, the underlying ideological presence of Whiteness may counter the work of teacher educators who design race-related curriculum and use various race-related frameworks to inform teachers' practices. Based on this review of literature, it is possible that teachers report feeling unprepared to engage race because teacher education programs, as a structure, have a much stronger influence on shaping teachers' beliefs, feelings, and, ultimately, practices than teacher educators. Another possible explanation for underprepared teachers is that there are too few teacher educators engaging in the movement to support teachers to be race-centered. To some extent, both conjectures could be valid; still, the literature is clear that there are paradoxical forces at work in the context of developing race-centered teachers. Consequently, teachers continue to report being unprepared.

2.5.1 Disruptive Movement Toward Race in Teacher Education

In this discussion, I further explore the literature in this review using Milner's (2008) theory of disruptive movement in teacher education to make sense of the potential interconnectedness between and among teacher educators and institutional practices. From a social movement standpoint, Milner also provides a way to assess this body of literature to better understand whether or not there is enough momentum to actually shift the nature of teacher education to be more race-centered. Briefly, Milner argues that educators with equity-focused identities must converge to identify the present conditions and realities as well as draw on prior evidence of related impacts of those conditions and realities. The purpose of such movements, he stressed, should be grounded in a goal for collective benefit and not for the benefit of any one person; thus, the movement must be sustained over time. Next, by drawing on the literature in this

review, I use tenets of his theory of disruptive social movement in teacher education to explain, in part, why teachers are likely to continue exiting preparation programs without the tools they need to build race-centered instructional practices.

2.5.1.1 Develop intra-group convergence

Movements typically involve like-minded groups converging and organizing before action with the general body. Among teacher educators claiming to be equity minded, it is important to observe on what their research interest focuses. Take *promoting teacher reflection on race*, an emergent sub-theme in this review, for instance. It can be assumed that the reflective component of a teacher's practice is essential for, as Freire (1970) noted, "learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions" (p. 35) in order to engage in action against social inequity. Put simply, reflection encourages action. I draw attention to this particular finding because, although they are over-represented in the academy (Meyers, 2016), White researchers contributed almost nothing to the literature on promoting teacher reflection on race in this review (I determined this by how authors self-identified in their articles and by observing, in pictures, their skin color and physical appearances). One reason for this might be that White researchers are not "sharing the burden of race (p. 2)," to borrow from Matias and Grosland (2016) or they are not publishing in this area because it could damage their reputation of Whiteness (Harris, 1993). To be clear, I am not suggesting that White researchers purposefully avoid publishing about race. I am arguing that a larger number of White colleagues (e.g., Cochran-Smith or Sleeter) investing their scholarly capital in race could signal, to the institution, a convergence of interests toward a more race-centered approach to preparing teachers.

2.5.1.2 Build on contextual knowledge

Movements build on contextual knowledge. In other words, for teacher education programs to center race, they must understand the ways in which race manifests itself in schools and society. Rather than developing a historically and contextually sound framework for incorporating race in teacher education, programs fashion their curriculum, intentionally or unintentionally, around Whiteness (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Sleeter, 2017). To this exact point, Milner remarked that teacher educators must, “understand the history of their particular programs and understand some of the idiosyncrasies embedded in the program and institution that can impede progress” (p. 340). Researchers point to the rich knowledge that teachers and teacher educators of color bring in terms of contextually nuanced understandings of race in education (Cook, 2013; Kohli 2009; Kraehe, 2015; Matias, 2013; Milner, Pearman & McGee, 2013). Unfortunately, these sites of knowledge seem to be overshadowed by the presence of Whiteness in the present teacher education structure.

2.5.1.3 Formulate a plan to restructure

Movements draw on prior evidence to inform participants whose interests may converge as well as to anticipate how those with diverging interests may halt said movement. For instance, designing teacher education programs to better support race-centered practices, I offer the following logic. Teacher education programs, in general, have been unsuccessful preparing race-centered teachers (Brazziel, 1965; Ether, 1967; Harty & Mahan; 1977; USCCR, 1968). In contemplating a plan to restructure teacher education programs, I echo Sleeter (2001) by asking, “Who are the successful teacher educators that are teaching about race and what do they do?” Perhaps, starting in the classrooms where teacher educators who encourage race-centered

practices teach, teacher education programs can begin to shift toward a more race-centered approach to preparing teachers.

As Milner (2008) suggested movements are, “proactive, reactive, and predictive” (p. 340). In fact, teacher educator practices that emerged in this review fit this framework. For instance, by promoting teacher reflection on race, teacher educators can head off uninformed deficit-beliefs that teachers bring into the classroom (Milner, 2003; Taylor, 2017). In designing race-related curriculum, teacher educators can anticipate and plan for common challenges teachers might have in confronting race (Pollock et al, 2016). Teacher educators can be proactive by calling out false empathy (Warren & Hotchkins, year) and addressing common critiques among supposed “social justice minded” teachers (Philip, 2012).

2.5.1.4 Present a collective benefit

Movements must represent a collective benefit. The literature shows how teacher education programs, policies and curricula can be shaped to serve an interest (D’Amico, 2016). As D’Amico argued, teacher education programs were responsible for shaping teachers’ beliefs and perceptions of professional identity to serve the interests of racial politics. Evidence suggests that movements can thrive when they build on a collective benefit emanating from teacher education programs. Therefore, encouraging teachers to center race in their work may require a convergence of interests among teacher educators.

2.5.1.5 Address sustainability

Movements require a long-term commitment. In teacher education, this means that race-centered teaching will have to remain constant component for adequately preparing teachers. Rodgers (2006) provided the only example of an actual teacher education program that espoused social

justice principles, helping teachers care about issues of race, social justice and environmental sustainability. The quality of this preparation program is not my contention, as there is certainly room for that critique. My point is that this standalone teacher education structure that was purported to be equity-focused was only in existence for 14 years. In some ways, 14 years of sustainability during the Civil Rights era is notable; however, it still demonstrates how equity-centered institutions are short-lived and generally unsustainable. Pollock and her colleagues (2010) illustrated how teachers consistently grapple with the individual role they play in sustaining race-centered practices to combat inequity. This challenge is also common among teacher educators who repeatedly confront teachers who reject learning about race (Ladson-Billings, 1998), threaten low evaluations (Matias, 2013) or abandon race-consciousness after teacher education (Grant, 1981).

2.6 CONCLUSION

Teacher educators have made significant contributions to the inclusion of race as a site of knowledge in teacher education. Several questions emerge from this review. For instance, how are equity-minded researchers sharing the responsibility of a movement toward racial justice by allocating their scholarly capital to exploring race? To the extent that researchers of color are the only contributors to a disruptive movement in teacher education, future teachers are likely to continue entering schools unprepared to engage race; thus, students of color may go underserved. The question emerges, are equity-minded researchers “walking the talk” when it comes to discussing race, or are they *colormute* (Pollock, 2009)? A second emergent question is who is highly qualified to provide access to tools and strategies for teachers to develop race-centered

practices? Although Austin (2009) posed a similar question as a critique of the “highly qualified” designation required of teachers, it is meaningful in this context. Building on Milner (2008), I am arguing that for a major shift to occur in the broader teacher education structure, there must be consensus on (a) what teachers need to know about race, (b) from where this knowledge will originate, and (c) in what ways qualified teacher educators will exemplify these practices. Finally, to what degree are teachers developing race-centered practices through learning in the present teacher education structure? While the same narrative exists (teachers are unprepared to engage race), it may be important to explore how teachers’ report their beliefs, feelings, and practices related to race. Moreover, these discoveries may be helpful to inform a radical, disruptive shift toward race in teacher education.

3.0 CHAPTER TWO: PREDICTIVE FACTORS RELATED TO TEACHERS' REPORTED PREPAREDNESS FOR RACE TALK

Considering vast evidence, research has stressed that teachers need a deeper understanding of race and the ways in which schools and society have contributed to racial inequity and negatively influenced opportunities for school success among many children of color (Seider & Huguley, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2012). Where standardized tests and accountability measures may offer some insight into learning and school success, they may not adequately capture other measures of student success, such as students' racial identities (Wang & Huguley, 2012), as well as students' engagement with and involvement in disrupting relevant issues of social inequity (Endo, 2015; Freire, 1970). In fact, when teachers are restricted to a narrow curriculum (Milner, 2013b), they may miss opportunities to more deeply understand outside of school factors that disproportionately impact the lives and school experiences of many children of color (Alvarez, 2017; Burdick-Will, 2013; Fisher, Viano, Curran, Pearman & Gardella, 2017; Kozol, 2012; Milam, Furr-Holden, & Leaf, 2010; Noguera, 2003). At the same time, when teachers are unaware of the ways in which racial inequity and injustice operate inside of schools, they may unintentionally contribute to policies and practices that further marginalized youth of color (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Blanchett, 2006; Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2017; CRDC, 2016; Gilliam, Maupin, Reyes, Accavatti & Shic, 2016).

This chapter builds on the teacher education literature and the concept of self-efficacy to illustrate how factors, such as race, may be related to teachers' feelings of preparedness to engage issues of race, specifically through dialogues about race with students in their classrooms. This chapter addresses the following two interrelated research questions:

- 1). Do teachers' reported feelings of preparedness to engage in race talk differ by (a) teacher education program effectiveness, (b) teachers' race, (c) classroom student racial demographic, and (d) number of years of teaching experience?
- 2). What are the strongest predictors of teachers' reported feelings of preparedness for race talk?

This chapter aims to contribute to what is known about how best teacher education programs can support teachers' development of race-centered practices. In the following sections, I provide background literature and theoretical framing for this study and chapter. Then, in the research design section, I describe the Teachers' Race Talk Survey, the sample selection process, and the analytic approaches I used. I present findings related to the predictive power of race-focused teacher education programs, administrator and parental support, and student racial demographic on teachers' feelings of preparedness to engage in race dialogues with students. I conclude the chapter by discussing limitations and implications for future research, theory, and practice.

3.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1.1 Centering Race in Teachers' Work

Given that teachers play an important role in their students' lives and school experiences, researchers have underscored that teachers need a clear understanding of race and the ways in which schools and society have contributed to racial inequity (Seider & Huguley, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2012). In fact, much evidence links racial disparities in educational outcomes to teachers' beliefs or subjective assessments of students of color. For example, research shows that Black students are more than three times as likely to be suspended than White students (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2017; CRDC, 2016). Similarly, a recent Yale study found that White teachers' views are significantly more negative toward students of color (Gilliam, Maupin, Reyes, Accavatti & Shic, 2016). Research has also noted there is an underrepresentation of children of color in advance placement and gifted programs (Gay, 2010) and overrepresentation of children of color in special education programs (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Blanchett, 2006). Not only are such disparities in discipline and academic opportunities for children of color often related to their teachers' beliefs and subjective assessments but they also reflect, according to research, a long-standing history of racial inequity and injustice in schools and society.

For example, students of color have disproportionately high chances of living at or below the poverty line (Proctor, Semega, & Kollar, 2016). Accordingly, economic restrictions may dictate where families can afford to live and what schools their children can attend, which may be related to inequitable access to information on school choice options (Delale-O'Connor, 2018). Moreover, numerous studies have shown, for instance, that families of color are more

likely to live in areas with limited access to opportunities for employment, transportation and quality health care (Munin, 2012; Tate, 2008), higher exposure to community and school violence (Alvarez, 2017; Pearman, 2017), and harsh and harmful conditions (Burdick-Will, 2013; Fisher, Viano, Curran, Pearman & Gardella, 2017; Kozol, 2012; Milam, Furr-Holden, & Leaf, 2010; Noguera, 2003). The implications from these studies point to a need for teachers to recognize students' outside of school realities, especially where race is concerned. Milner (2013a) offered several instructional practices for teachers to better meet the needs of students who may grapple with outside of school issues, such as poverty; in particular, a few suggestions for teachers were to:

- learn about students' outside-of-school realities and make connections to the curriculum inside of school
- develop meaningful and sustainable relationships with students and their families
- empower students to recognize injustice and change inequitable and unfair policies and practices

Essentially, what Milner and others argue, is that if teachers are adequately prepared to center race in their work, they can develop instructional practices to serve all students well, and especially children of color who face undue challenges related to inside and outside of school inequities. Moreover, when teachers center race in their work, not only can they work to disrupt historical and present racial inequities but they may also avoid adopting lower expectations and deficit perspectives of students of color (Milner, 2010). In this sense, teachers can center race in their teaching practice by inviting students to engage in dialogues about race to discuss outside of school realities and issues of injustice.

Studies document several benefits of using dialogues around race and injustice. For example, engaging in dialogues about real world issues, such as race and injustice, have been shown to build community and share knowledge between teachers and students for the purposes of disrupting oppressive structures and systems (Endo, 2015; Freire, 1970). This pedagogical practice, as Freire described, identifies issues that are important to students and students' communities and results in a co-created action plan. Another example of using race dialogues emerges from research on parent racial socialization. This research has found that Black students may benefit from talking about race and injustice as evidenced by higher GPAs and educational aspirations (Wang & Huguley, 2012). Moreover, schools and teachers play a role in the racial socialization process, namely in the design of learning environments that are supportive, encouraging, and equipped to resist racial injustice. Thirdly, research suggests that discussing race can shed light on how teachers may be unintentionally contributing to individual and systemic forms of racism (Gay & Howard, 2000; Milner, 2012).

Centering race in teachers' work, according to this research, is important for advancing educational equity for all students. However, despite the alarming evidence of racial disparities and benefits of centering race in classroom settings, researchers recognize that teachers are often fearful and unwilling to learn about and incorporate race in their practices; basically, teachers are unprepared to engage issues related to race and racism (Buchanan, 2015; Pimentel, 2010; Sleeter, 1993; Sleeter, 2001; Watson, 2012). To be clear, these studies report that teachers struggle with feeling prepared to engage race due their unwillingness to acknowledge and admit that racial inequity exists and can be perpetuated through their teaching practices.

3.1.2 Preparing Teachers to Engage with Issues of Race

Pollock, Mira, Decman and Shalaby (2010) argued, before teachers can be prepared to engage in race-centered instructional practices, they must first *acknowledge and accept that racial inequality exists*. Second, teachers must be able to *understand how and the degree to which their actions influence racial inequality*. These two assumptions help explain why some teachers may report feeling unprepared for race talk. For example, consider the context in which some teachers are socialized to understand race. Particularly in a colorblind society, teachers may have been socialized to believe that discussing race today is inconsequential today or it violates an implicit set of social norms that imply racism is over (Sue, 2015). Teachers may not be able to acknowledge or accept racism's existence if they don't believe it is present. Other teachers may have been socialized in an isolated context with too few opportunities to explore issues of race in various ways. Bonilla-Silva, Goar, and Embrick (2006) found that, as a result of racial segregation, many White people today have few collective experiences with Black people, meaning White people's understanding of racial matters is determined by media, stereotypes, and second-hand narratives. In short, given teachers' varying levels of experiential knowledge and ways of seeing the world, they may or may not be prepared to acknowledge and accept that race and racism exist.

Because teachers tend to enter programs with little to no knowledge and understanding of race (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Matias, 2013), teacher education programs can play a critical role in building learning opportunities for teachers to explore race. Research illustrates that race is becoming more prominent in teacher education programs; yet, there is a conflict around how opportunities to learn about race are being shaped. Many studies, for example, report the presence of Whiteness and racism embedded within teacher education structures may potentially

limit teachers' opportunities to learn about race (Cook, 2013; Kraehe, Hood & Travis, 2015; Lam, 2015; Matias, Montoya & Nishi, 2016; Milner, 2008; Sleeter, 2017). In other words, race, as a curricular site, tends to be designed from a White-centered perspective to benefit mostly White students. To illustrate, Cook (2013) pointed out, "Many teacher education programs reinforce and reify the very systems of White supremacy and ethnocentrism that they purport to prepare teachers to resist" (p. 46). Building on Cook's argument, Kraehe (2015) added that the effort to prepare pre-service teachers should not be monopolized by White teachers' needs. Although race may be more prominent as a site of knowledge in teacher education programs, it may not be advancing educational equity.

While some teacher education programs may be ineffective for preparing teachers to engage race in ways that advance educational equity, other research has demonstrated that teacher education programs can and do support teachers' development of race-consciousness (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Howard, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Lewis, 2010; Matias, 2013; Pollock, Deckman, Mira and Shalaby, 2010). In fact, this research establishes the importance of incorporating a strategically designed race-related curriculum for pre-service teachers. One aspect of a race-related curriculum refers to promoting teacher reflection (Boyd & Glazier, 2017; Taylor, 2017). By targeting particular aspects of race-reflection (Milner, 2003) and highlighting race-reflection as an embedded component (Pollock et al, 2016), teacher education programs attempt to encourage teachers to develop the autonomy to be reflective beyond their preparation programs (Grant, 1981). Studies also illustrate a few approaches to facilitate teacher reflection, such as journaling, critical dialogue, and auto-ethnographies (Hughes, 2008; Mason, 2016; Taylor, 2017).

Especially when exploring multiple identity spaces, such as language diversity, a race-related curriculum may enhance teachers' understandings of their students (Cho et al, 2012; Lew, 2012). Deeper understandings of students' lives and realities may help teachers avoid seeing students from a deficit perspective. Additionally, the use of appropriate tools, strategies, and language has been shown to be essential for preparing teachers to engage in race-centered practices (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Pollock et al, 2010). To further support teachers' development of race-centered teaching practices, teacher educators design curricular interventions to encourage race-engagement, such as literature (King, 2016; Ross, 2017), interactive games (Jost & Whitfield, 2005), and service-learning projects (Endo, 2015).

Building on this research, race-centered teaching is a pedagogical approach that some teacher educators incorporate to prepare teachers to engage issues of race. For example, teacher educators have demonstrated how to join and critique broader conversations that attempt to perpetuate racial inequalities (Blanchett & Wynne, 2007), such as national conversations about police violence on unarmed Black bodies (Berry & Stovall, 2013; Hill, 2016; Milner, 2017). Similarly, teacher educators stress the significance of modeling, for teachers, how to recognize and confront contradictions in various social structures (Austin, 2009). For instance, scholars have recognized and confronted aspects of teacher education programs for underemphasizing race in the curriculum or minimizing the role race plays in the preparation of teachers (Allen et al, 2017; Zion, Allen & Jean, 2016). These and other studies (Philip, 2012; Warren & Hotchkins, 2015) illustrate how some teacher education programs are, in fact, effective for preparing teachers to engage race.

In sum, the literature in this section illustrated that centering race in teachers' work is essential for disrupting long-standing histories of racial inequity in society and schools.

Moreover, the benefits to engaging in critical discussions with students about race include positive correlations to students' academic performance and racial identity. Talking about issues of race in the classroom may also empower students to recognize injustice and work toward action to change inequitable systems around them. Equally important, engaging in discussions about race can help teachers disrupt previously held beliefs about race, students of color, and broader systems of inequity. The literature also showed that teacher education programs might not necessarily be supporting teachers' development of race-consciousness. That is, teachers may not necessarily exit their teacher education programs feeling prepared to engage in dialogues about race with students in their classrooms.

3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SELF-EFFICACY

While this study does not measure self-efficacy, this research draws on the concept of self-efficacy as an organizational approach to frame concepts related to teachers' feelings of preparedness for race talk. Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's beliefs or judgments about her or his perceived ability to execute a certain task within a given context (Bandura, 1986). In this section, I aim to explain how self-efficacy is operationalized, how self-efficacy can help to explain teachers' feelings of preparedness for race talk, and explore how factors related to self-efficacy may be transferrable to factors related to teachers' reported feelings of preparedness to engage issues of race.

To explain how self-efficacy is operationalized, I refer to Figure 1, an adapted model of Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy framework. The model suggests that a person engages in a task according to her or his perceived self-efficacy. Bandura makes a distinction between an

individual's self-efficacy beliefs (shown in this model) and outcome expectation, or a belief that performing said task will result in a particular outcome (not shown in the model). Whether or not a person believes the given task will result in a certain outcome is far less important than a person's perceived ability to engage in the given task. In practical terms, it is more important that a teacher has a high sense of self-efficacy for race talk than it is for her or him to believe that race talk can help disrupt racial inequity.

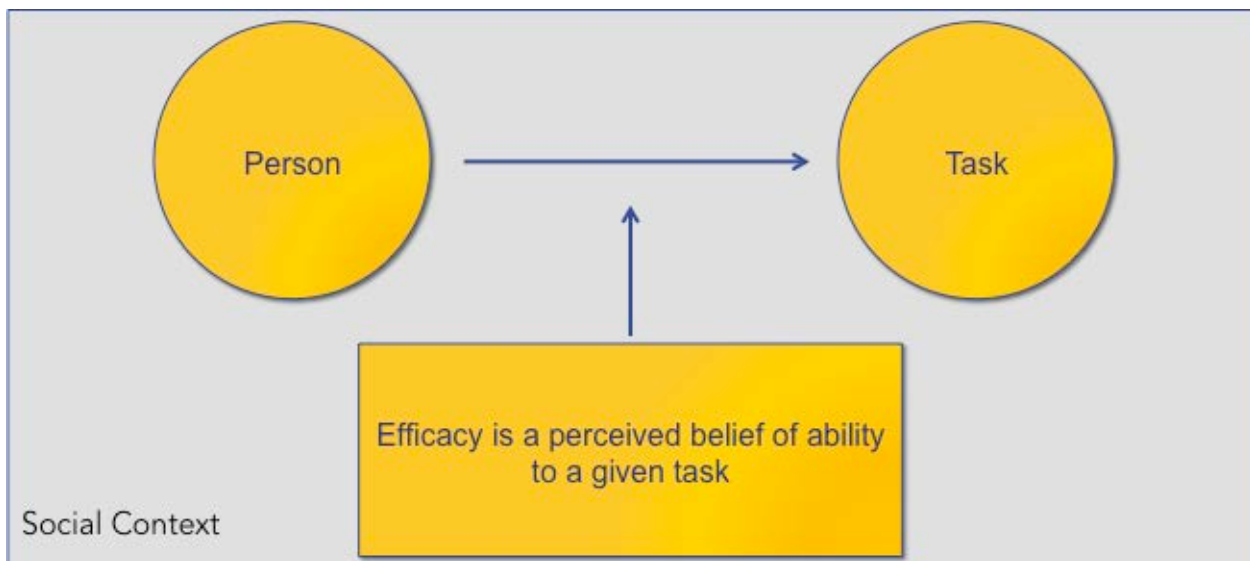


Figure 5. Model adapted from Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy framework. This figure demonstrates that self-efficacy influences the probability that a person will engage in a given task.

Bandura described three domains of efficacy beliefs. First, the strength of beliefs may determine whether initial effort is invested in performing a task; weak beliefs may also predict low persistence upon failing a given task. Second, the difficulty of a task may influence engagement and persistence. Third, her performing a given task can be influenced by whether or not she believes her success in performing a task is transferrable to different contexts. Consider race talk as the given task. Teachers may be more likely to engage in race talk if they have strong beliefs in their abilities, if they see race talk as a feasible task, and if they believe their skills for race talk are applicable in certain school contexts.

At this point, I want to stress that I am not equating self-efficacy to feelings of preparedness. I am, however, making a theoretical link between self-efficacy and reported feelings of preparedness to discuss race. If preparedness and self-efficacy are linked, as other studies have shown (Giallo & Little, 2003; Housego, 1990), then a teacher who is unprepared to engage in race talk may also be seen as a teacher with a low sense of self-efficacy for race talk. Teacher educators attempt to address low efficacy or unpreparedness by designing learning opportunities, such as, journaling, reflective dialogues, and service learning projects, with the aim of helping teachers gain experiential knowledge to better understand race and racism (Matias, 2016; Milner, 2010).

Table 1: Description of Sources of Efficacy and Relevance to Race Talk Preparedness

Sources of efficacy	Connections to race talk preparedness
<i>Mastery experiences:</i> According to Bandura (1977), individuals are more likely to persist through and positively respond to failure when performing a task if they have actually experienced previous success with that same task.	Teachers may feel more prepared to engage in race talks if they have had actual successes with discussing race with an array of people in various contexts and situations
<i>Vicarious experiences:</i> For Bandura (1977), individuals are more likely to perform a task if they observe comparable models successfully performing that same task.	Teachers may feel more prepared when they have observed other teachers in similar sociopolitical contexts—such as White teachers observing other White teachers working with racially diverse students—successfully engaging in race talks.
<i>Social and verbal persuasion:</i> Bandura (1986) defined social persuasion as a source of efficacy that can emerge from being verbally persuaded about one's ability to perform a task.	Teachers may feel more prepared to engage in race talk when they are encouraged and praised for talking about race in equitable ways
<i>Physiological arousal:</i> Understanding the body's response to stress or anxiety related to performing a specific task, Bandura (1977) reported, can improve efficacy beliefs.	Teachers may feel more prepared to engage in race talk when they understand that fear or discomfort have been associated with discussing race

In the same way, Bandura (1986) suggested sources of efficacy help individuals acquire new information to disrupt any doubt, fear or perceived threat (See Table 1). Essentially, a source of efficacy is a learning experience that strengthens a person's belief in her or his ability to perform a task. Bandura suggested there are four sources that provide varying levels of efficacy. For example, self-efficacy can be strengthened more through an authentic mastery

experience than through verbal persuasion. That is, self-efficacy would be strengthened more if a teacher had a successful race talk experience than it would if a teacher's colleague praised her race talk skills.

So far, I have attempted to make a theoretical link between feelings of preparedness and self-efficacy as one way to conceptualize the process by which teachers come to feel prepared to discuss race. Specifically, by drawing on the self-efficacy research, I suggested that teacher education programs influence teachers' feelings of preparedness by providing learning opportunities through which teachers acquire new information to disrupt any doubt, fear or perceived threat. While this connection has not emerged in my reviews of literature, I would posit that teachers who believe their teacher education programs prepared them to discuss race would be more likely to report feeling prepared.

While the self-efficacy research has been insightful as an explanatory framework, the theoretical link between self-efficacy and reported feelings of preparedness for race talk sheds light on new questions, such as, to what degree does a given school context influence a teacher's feelings of preparedness for race talk? A similar question emerged within the self-efficacy literature. In fact, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001), questioned, "How much does a change in context, such as a move from an urban to a suburban or rural context, arouse a reassessment" (p. 802). By reassessment, they were referring to a teacher's reevaluation of self-efficacy according to said context shift. In further reviewing the literature, I discovered teachers' feelings of preparedness for race talk might be influenced by several other factors related to school contexts.

As self-efficacy research tends to rely on teacher self report data, studies find that various contextual factors are related to lower feelings of self-efficacy. Research has shown that

teachers' self-efficacy can be negatively influenced by urban settings (Walter, Gouze & Lim, 2006; Warren, 2012), schools with larger populations of students of color (Rushton, 2003; Siwatu, 2011), and schools with large numbers of students whose first language is not English (Chu & Garcia, 2014; Natesan & Kieftenbeld, 2013; Siwatu, 2007). What these studies argue, essentially, is that teachers' beliefs about race tend to be associated with lower feelings of teacher self-efficacy. In other words, when teachers work in school contexts with a majority Black or Latino student population, they tend to perceive their teaching ability to be much less effective. Additionally, teachers' perceptions of parents (Lee, Patterson and Vega, 2011) as well as perceptions of school communities and administrators (Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008) suggest that in particular school contexts, teachers can feel more or less efficacious.

3.3 THE CURRENT STUDY

Teachers' feelings of preparedness to discuss race with students in their class could be related to teacher education program effectiveness, teachers' beliefs about race, and teachers' perceptions of parents and administrators. Self-efficacy theory helps to explain how teachers' feelings of preparedness may rely on the experiential knowledge they have acquired through teacher education programs. Moreover, self-efficacy research indicates that the school context in which teachers work might be related to their reported feelings of preparedness. For instance, a teacher working in a majority White student school context might feel more or less prepared to discuss race than if she or he worked in a majority Black student school context. Similarly, teachers may feel more prepared to engage in race talks with students if teachers believe they have administrator and parent support. In reviewing the literature, I have encountered no studies that

examine these proposed relationships related to teachers' feelings of preparedness for race talk in the classroom. This chapter explores these unknown relationships and contributes to the broader teacher education literature on preparing teachers to engage issues of race. In the following section, I explain my research design in order to address the following two interrelated research questions:

- 1). Do teachers' reported feelings of preparedness to engage in race talk differ by (a) teacher education program effectiveness, (b) teachers' race, (c) classroom student racial demographic, and (d) number of years of teaching experience?
- 2). What are the strongest predictors of teachers' reported feelings of preparedness for race talk?

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.4.1 Participants and Data Sources

The data in this study comes from the Teachers' Race Talk Survey (TRTS) instrument, an exploratory survey my colleagues and I constructed in Qualtrics, a web based survey tool (See Appendix for TRTS). Surveys can be useful to capture opinions and beliefs within a specified population using both close- and open-ended items (Creswell, 2017). Although a facilitator can administer surveys, researchers have found that self-administered surveys tend to more accurately represent participants' actual beliefs or feelings (Groves et al, 2011). While there can be drawbacks to using forced response items that offer only 2 or 3 choices, such as minimal variability, participants tend to be more willing to answer because the "burden placed on a

subject is very low for any one item,” as Devellis (2003) noted (p. 84). I want to stress that neither this survey nor my analyses purport to measure or claim to know participants’ actual beliefs and feelings; rather, I recognize that these data capture “*reported beliefs and feelings*.”

A 32-item survey, the TRTS begins with 8 demographic items, including teachers’ race, students’ racial demographic and years teaching. Twelve close-ended items, such as “I believe race is an important topic to discuss in the classroom,” aim to get a general sense of teachers’ reported beliefs and feelings by offering a forced response option of “yes,” “no” or “not sure.” Finally, each close-ended item is followed by an open-ended response prompt that asks participants to elaborate on their close-ended responses.

This exploratory study used data from a non-random sample collected over the 2016-2017 academic year. The authors of the TRTS began sample selection locally with the University of Pittsburgh School of Education current and former teacher education program students and local educational networks throughout Pittsburgh. Nationally, the TRTS team invited all 62 American Association University (AAU) Deans of Education and/or Directors or Coordinators of Teacher Education Program. The Literacy Research Association also posted the survey to its distribution list. At the time of this study, 495 participants completed the survey. There were 13 participants who began the survey, but then never logged in to finish. Rather than using imputation, I address the missing data by excluding the 18 observations.

3.4.2 Variables of Interest

After exporting my dataset from Qualtrics to Microsoft Excel, I began developing variables based on my review of literature. I coded *prepared*, my primary outcome variable of interest, as a binary indicator of whether or not a teacher reported feeling prepared to discuss race. I coded

program effectiveness as a binary indicator of whether or not a teacher reported that their program prepared them to discuss race

For race variables, I coded *teacher race* as a binary indicator of whether or not a teacher was White. *Student race* was a binary indicator whether or not a teacher reported their classroom racial composition as primarily White. For support variables, I coded *parental support* and *administrator support* as binary indicators of whether or not a teacher reported that parents and administrators, respectively, would support teachers in discussing race with students. Finally, for experience variables, I coded *years* as a continuous variable and *in-service* and *over10* as binary indicators of in-service status and having more than 10 years of experience.

3.4.3 Analytic Strategies

Below, I organize my analytic approach by research question. To answer the first question, I use basic descriptive statistics and two sample t-tests to identify differences in outcomes by subgroups. For the second research question, I use logistic regression analysis to determine predictive relationships between the independent variables of interest and the outcome variable of interest, preparedness for race talk.

3.4.3.1 Do teachers' reported feelings of preparedness to engage in race talk differ by (a) teacher education program effectiveness, (b) teachers' race, (c) classroom student racial demographic, and (d) number of years of teaching experience?

Using Stata 15, I began my analyses with a broad descriptive understanding of the entire dataset across all variables of interest. This insight was useful for comparative purposes, as I began to further explore 4 different subgroups of teachers. I performed two-sample t-tests, one for each

subsample, to observe any significant differences between reported preparedness among four different subgroups of teachers in this sample: (a) Teachers with or without race-focused teachers education programs, (b) White teachers and non-White teachers, (c) teachers who teach mostly White students and teachers who do not teach mostly White students, and (d) teachers with more than 10 years of experience and teachers with fewer than 10 years of experience. For comparative purposes, I also performed a two-sample t-test between in-service teachers and pre-service teachers. In a matrix, I recorded each mean value of preparedness and whether or not there were significant differences between the sub-samples.

After establishing a baseline understanding of the whole dataset and sub-groups of teachers of interest, I then focused on differences in preparedness for race talk among in-service teachers by years of experience. To observe the relationship between reported feelings of preparedness and years of teaching experience, I tabulated the mean value at each time interval in order to visualize some linear relationship. That is, I tabulated mean preparedness at each year of teaching experience from 0 to 22⁶. By plotting the mean values at each year of teaching experience I was able to observe how feelings of preparedness varied according to years of teaching experience.

3.4.3.2 What are the strongest predictors of reported feelings of preparedness to engage in race talk among the teachers in this sample?

To address my second question, it was most appropriate to use logistic regression analysis to determine the strongest predictors of reported feelings of preparedness for race talk (Agresti &

⁶ Although the in-service teacher sample had a few teachers with up to 40 years of experience, almost 93% percent fell between 0-22 years. I excluded teachers with more than 22 years of teaching experience because in many cases either 1 or 2 teachers determined the mean value.

Finlay, 2009)⁷. Before performing this series of tests though, I created a correlation matrix to observe the strength and significance between my variables of interest. For instance, there was a significantly negative relationship between parental support and White students. That is, teachers who teach mostly White students tended to perceive parents would not be supportive of race talk. I incorporated significant variable relationships in my logistic regression models. I began with the following simple equation to understand how reported preparedness for race talk was related to reported program effectiveness:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Y_i (\text{prepared}) = & B_0 + B_1 (\text{program}_i) + \\
 & B_2 (\text{teacher race}_i) + B_3 (\text{student race}_i) + \\
 & B_4 (\text{parental support}_i) + B_5 (\text{administrator support}_i) + \\
 & B_6 (\text{years}_i) + \\
 & B_7 (\text{over10}_i)
 \end{aligned}$$

where Y_i is the probability a teacher reports feeling prepared to discuss race, B_0 represents the baseline estimate odds of Y_i . B_1 represents the average odds ratio when teachers report that their teacher education program was effective in preparing them to discuss race, controlling for all included covariates. From here, I used a stepwise approach to incorporate race variables (B_2 - B_3), support variables (B_4 - B_5), years of experience (B_6), and over10 years of experience (B_7).

⁷ Using logistic regression analysis is especially appropriate when using dummy variables (value= 0 or 1). For example, Radelet & Pierce (1991) used logistic regression to predict the odds that a defendant in a murder trial would receive the death penalty. With data from about 700 cases, they used defendant's race ($d=1$ if White) and victim's race ($v=1$ if White) to predict the odds of a death penalty verdict ($y=1$ if death penalty). Therefore, by using logistic regression to analyze the TRTS data, I can use parental support for instance, to predict the odds that a teacher reports feeling prepared for race talk.

3.5 RESULTS

I begin with a broad overview of the entire sample. As shown in Table 2, just under half of the sample reported feeling prepared to engage in race talk. The second row indicates that 35% of teachers reported that their teacher education program effectively prepared them to engage in race talk. Although half report feeling prepared and even fewer believe their teacher education program prepared them to engage race, the majority of teachers report that race is an important topic to discuss with students in class. What is immediately obvious in these teacher reports is the gap between believing race is important to discuss and feeling unprepared to do so. While the assumption may be that teacher education programs are responsible for preparing teachers, it appears, from these data, that very few teachers credit their teacher education programs for adequately preparing them for race talk.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for 495 Participants in the Teachers Race Talk Survey

	Variable Description	Mean (Share of total sample)
Prepared	Feels prepared for race talk	.49
Program	Believes teacher education prepared teacher for race talk	.35
White Teacher	Teacher identifies as White	.82
White Student	Identifies student demographic as majority White	.37
Admin Support	Believes administrator supports teacher race talk	.44
Parent Support	Believes students' parents support teacher race talk	.30
In-service	Identifies as an in-service teacher	.48
Over10	In-service teacher reports having 10 or more years of experience	.42

In the fourth and fifth rows, the table shows that the majority of teachers in this sample identify as White, while 37% of the sample identified their student racial makeup as majority White. In other words, there were very few teachers of color, which is not surprising given the national teacher demographic; and, most teachers in this sample teach either in racially diverse or majority student of color school contexts, which may help to contextualize teachers' perception

of external support. From rows six and seven, the data show that teachers in this sample perceived administrator and parent support for race talk to be fairly low. Yet, when compared to perceptions of parent support, teachers tended to perceive administrators as more supportive of race talk. Finally, about 48% of the sample is in-service and 42% of in-service teachers have 10 or more years of teaching experience. Now that I have presented an overview of the sample, I turn next to address each research question.

3.5.1 Comparing Teachers' Reported Beliefs and Feelings of Preparedness by Subgroups

In Table 3, I note distinctions in reported feelings of preparedness to engage in race talk by subgroups of teachers. To explain the data in Table 4, I address each panel individually. Although Panel A refers to pre-service teachers, for comparative purposes, Panels B-E highlight in-service teacher sub-groups.

Panel A compares pre-service and in-service teachers. The two groups had relatively similar numbers of teachers. To begin, pre-and in-service teachers' reported beliefs and feelings were significantly different across all 4 variables. While pre-service teachers reported a significantly higher belief that their program was preparing them to engage race, in-service teachers actually showed significantly higher reports of feeling prepared. Finally, as columns 4 and 5 show, in-service teachers report significantly higher perceptions that parents and administrators would support race talk. This is not surprising considering the limited experience pre-service teachers may have. Moreover, the concept of parents and administrators supporting teacher race talk likely means something different to pre-service teachers who may have not even been in real classroom settings.

Table 3. Descriptive Summary and Results of T-tests Comparing Mean Values (%) across Sub-groups

Sub-Group		Reported Preparedness for Race Talk	Perception of Program Effectiveness	Perception of Parental Support	Perception of Administrative Support
Panel A In-service					
Pre-service	(n=257)	43	43*	22	37
In-service	(n=238)	56*	27	38*	56*
In-Service Teachers Only					
Panel B Program Effective					
Prog Yes	(n=65)	78*		49*	65
Prog No	(n=173)	47		34	53
Panel C Teacher Race					
White	(n=202)	55	35	38	51
Non-White	(n=36)	58	36	42	61
Panel D Student Race					
White	(n=83)	47	22	24	48
Non-White	(n=155)	61*	30	46*	60
Panel E Teacher w/ 10					
10 + years	(n=99)	71*	17	46*	61
0-9 years	(n=139)	45	35*	32	53

Note. The mean value marked with an asterisk signifies that the mean value is significantly higher than the mean value for the comparison group in a given panel. With the exception of Panel A, Panels B-E should not be compared across sub-groups in other panels, as there could be overlap. For instance, a teacher can be both White (Panel C) and a teacher with 10 or more years of experience (Panel E).

* $p < 0.05$

The results in Panel B suggest that in-service teachers who reported that their teacher education programs were effective in preparing them to engage in race talk had significantly higher reports of feeling prepared for race talk. Additionally, perceptions of parental support for race talk were significantly higher among teachers who reported having effective teachers education programs. The results showed no significant differences in how teachers perceive administrative support.

Panel C focused on in-service teachers by White teacher status. The results showed no significant differences in teacher responses across variables of interest. Panel D compared groups

of teachers who teach mostly White students and teachers who do not teach mostly White students. Between the two groups, teachers who work in classrooms that are not primarily White reported significantly higher feelings of preparedness for race talk and perceptions of parental support.

Finally, in Panel E, the results show significant differences between in-service teachers who have 0-9 years of teaching experience and teachers who have 10 or more years of experience. Teachers with 0-9 years of experience reported significantly higher beliefs about their teacher education program effectiveness. However, the biggest significant difference across any sub-group emerged in reported feelings of preparedness for race talk between teachers with fewer than 10 years and teachers with 10 or more years of experience. In fact, 71% of teachers with 10 or more years of teaching experience reported that they felt prepared to engage in race talk with students in the classroom.

There are two additional findings to address related to years of teaching experience. One is feeling prepared for race talk and the other is perception of teacher education program effectiveness. In Figure 4, I show probability values for preparedness for race talk and program effectiveness for in-service teachers by years of experience. The horizontal line in Figure 4 represents a comparative benchmark based on the mean preparedness and program effectiveness values among pre-service teachers (refer back to Panel A in Table 3). In other words, 43% of pre-service teachers reported feeling prepared to engage race and 43% reported that their teacher education program is effective in preparing them to engage race (these mean values are coincidentally identical). By plotting mean values at each year of experience, there appears to be an upward trend, implying that teachers with more years of experience tend to report feeling more prepared for race talk. It is also clear that teachers in this sample with 0-9

years of experience had virtually the same reported feelings of preparedness, on average, as pre-service teachers. In fact, the difference in reported preparedness between teachers with 0-9 years of experience and pre-service teachers was only 2 percentage points, according to Panels A and E in the above-mentioned Table 3. Teachers in this sample who appear to be the most prepared to engage in race talk are those who have been teaching for some time.

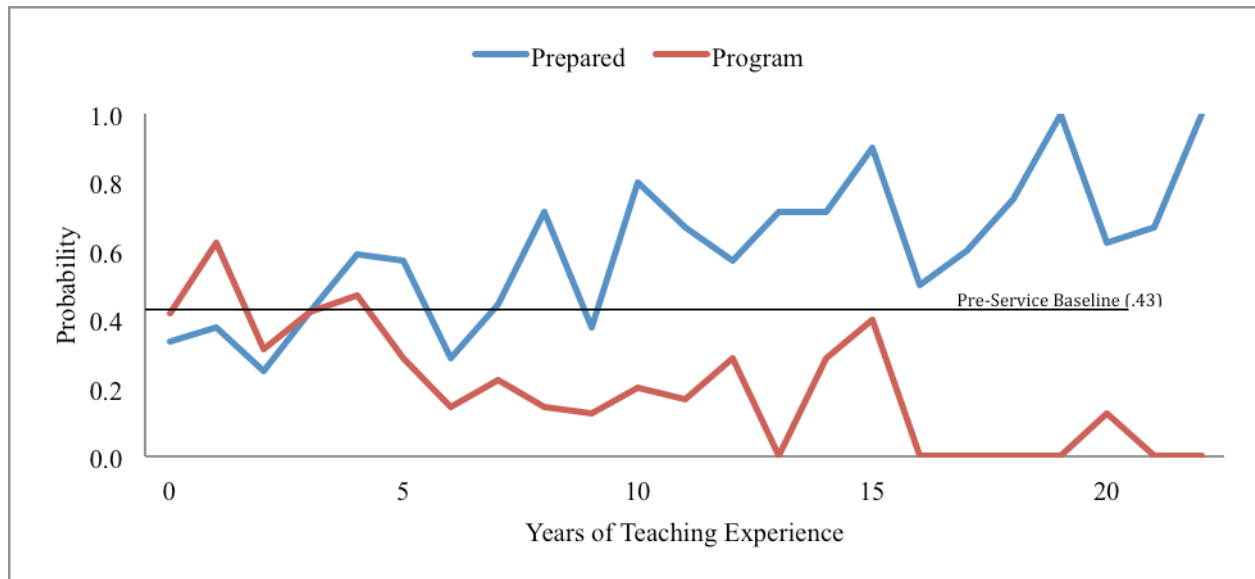


Figure 6. Probability of preparedness for race talk and program effectiveness by years of experience. This figure expresses mean values for the outcome variable preparedness (share who reported feeling prepared for race talk) and predictor variable program effectiveness (share who reported teacher education program prepared them for race talk) at each year of experience among in-service teachers. For comparative purposes, the pre-service baseline (.43) is provided, which represents the mean value for variables “prepared” and “program.” This figure illustrates two trends. First, teachers with more years of teaching experience have a higher probability of feeling prepared for race talk. For instance, among in-service teachers with exactly 10 years of experience, there is a strong probability (.80) that she or he reported feeling prepared to discuss race. Second, teachers with more years of experience are more likely to report that their teacher education program was ineffective in preparing them for race talk.

The second point I address related to number of years teaching is program effectiveness. Although it seems logical that teachers who felt the most prepared to talk about race also believed their teacher education programs were effective in preparing them well, but this was not the case. The data show that teachers with more years of experience not only feel more prepared but they also tend not to believe their teacher education program prepared them to discuss race. In contrast, pre-service teachers and teachers with 0-9 years of experience tend to believe their programs are effective, yet they have much lower reports of preparedness than more tenured

teachers. Essentially, the two findings I presented could imply that the longer teachers are out of teacher education programs the more likely they are to feel prepared and also to believe their program was ineffective in preparing them to engage in race talk.

3.5.2 Predictors of Preparedness for Race Talk

Table 4 presents the results from logistic regression analyses predicting probability of reported feelings of preparedness among 238 in-service teachers⁸. Model 1 represents the odds ratio when teachers report that they believe their program prepared them to discuss race. The model suggests teachers who report that their programs were effective are about 4 times more likely to report feeling prepared for race talk than teachers who do not believe their program was effective. Model 2 shows no evidence that teacher race or student race can predict reported feelings of preparedness. With the inclusion of teacher and student race, program effectiveness remains a significantly strong predictor of preparedness.

The third column, Model 3, represents the estimated odds of feeling prepared with the inclusion of teachers' perceptions of parent and administrator support. Similar to the previous models, program effectiveness remains a significantly strong predictor of preparedness. This model suggests that program effectiveness and perception of support are all significant predictors of teacher preparedness, with administrative support being a slightly stronger predictor than parental support.

⁸ It is important to note that each model is independent of each other and the values in each model should be interpreted in the following way. When all other predictor variables are held constant, the predictor variable of interest, when $x=1$, increases or decreases the odds that a teacher, in this sample, would report feeling prepared when compared to teachers for whom $x=0$. The level of significance indicates that, based on this sample, there is strong enough evidence to make claims about the predicted odds ratios presented in each model.

Table 4. Logistic Regression Models Predicting Probability of Preparedness among In-service Teachers

	Model 1 ratio (SE)	Model 2 ratio (SE)	Model 3 ratio (SE)	Model 4 ratios (SE)	Model 5 ratio (SE)
Program	4.04*** (1.37)	3.95*** (1.35)	3.90*** (1.46)	6.93*** (2.94)	7.03*** (2.97)
White Teacher		1.17 (.46)	1.27 (.54)	1.25 (.54)	1.35 (.59)
White Student		-0.60 (.18)	-0.79 (.26)	-0.81 (.28)	-0.56 (.23)
Parental Support			2.84*** (.93)	2.48*** (.85)	1.71 (.68)
Admin Support			3.88*** (1.18)	4.31*** (1.40)	4.28*** (1.40)
Years				1.10*** (.03)	1.10*** (.03)
White Student x Parental Support					4.41 (3.76)
n	238	238	238	238	238
R ²	0.06	0.07	0.19	0.25	0.26

Exponentiated coefficients; standard errors in parentheses

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Model 4 includes years of experience, which slightly shifts the fitted values for support variables and it appears to increase the program variable's strength of predictability for preparedness. In other words, model 4 suggests that teachers who perceived their program to be effective were almost 7 times more likely to report feeling prepared than teachers who did not report that their programs were ineffective for preparing them to engage race. This model also estimates that for each unit increase in years, the probability a teacher, in this sample, would report feeling prepared slightly increases.

Model 5 incorporates an interaction between White students and parental support. Program effectiveness, administrator support, and years of experience remain significantly strong

predictors of preparedness. However, the impact of parental support on teachers' feelings of preparedness depends on whether or not a teacher works in a mostly White student school setting. When teachers reported not having parental support, the impact of teaching in White student settings was smaller than when teachers did perceive parental support. That is, when teachers did not perceive parental support the odds of teaching in White student settings and feeling prepared were .56 times lower than teaching in non-White student settings and feeling prepared. The "effect" of parental support was about 2.7 times stronger for teachers in White student settings when compared to teachers who worked in non-White settings. While including the interaction term weakened the strength and predictive power of parental support on feelings of preparedness, it helped to isolate the effect of parental support by student racial demographic among teachers in this sample.

3.6 DISCUSSION

This study investigated how teachers' perceptions of their teacher education programs, race, and school context factors were related to teachers' reported feelings of preparedness to engage race. This study showed that there were significantly higher reports of preparedness for race talk when teachers: (a) had effective, race-focused teacher education programs, (b) taught in mostly non-White student settings, or (c) had 10 or more years of teaching experience. While teacher education program effectiveness, administrative support for race talk, and years of experience were significantly strong predictors of teachers' feelings of preparedness for race talk, the results from this study show that teachers' perceptions of parental support for race talk was dependent

on whether or not a teacher worked in a majority White school setting. Next, I discuss three implications from this study.

3.6.1 Inside and Outside of Teacher Education Programs

This study supports the claim that teachers tend to enter programs with little to no knowledge and understanding of race (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Matias, 2013). According to the data, I would add that pre-service teachers and early career teachers might both have little to no understanding of race. For example, the teachers in this study with 0-9 years of experience show no significant differences in preparedness than pre-service teachers. From a self-efficacy perspective, this could mean that teachers with 10 or fewer years of experience have not had enough opportunities for race-engagement, to the degree that they are significantly more prepared for race talk than pre-service teachers. In other words, newer teachers' feelings of preparedness may be related to too few opportunities for mastery experiences, the strongest source of efficacy (Bandura, 1986). Still, veteran teachers in this sample reported higher feelings of preparedness, but it was likely not because of their teacher education programs.

Along with the fact that teacher education programs, in recent years, have been criticized for perpetuating Whiteness and avoiding race-related topics (Lam, 2015; Matias, Montoya & Nishi, 2016; Sleeter, 2017), a review of literature on race and teacher education (see Chapter 1), showed that before 2008, race was probably not a central component of preparing teachers. As shown below in Figure 5, teachers in this study with 10 or more years of experience would have exited teacher education programs before 2007, a time when race was virtually absent from the teacher education literature.

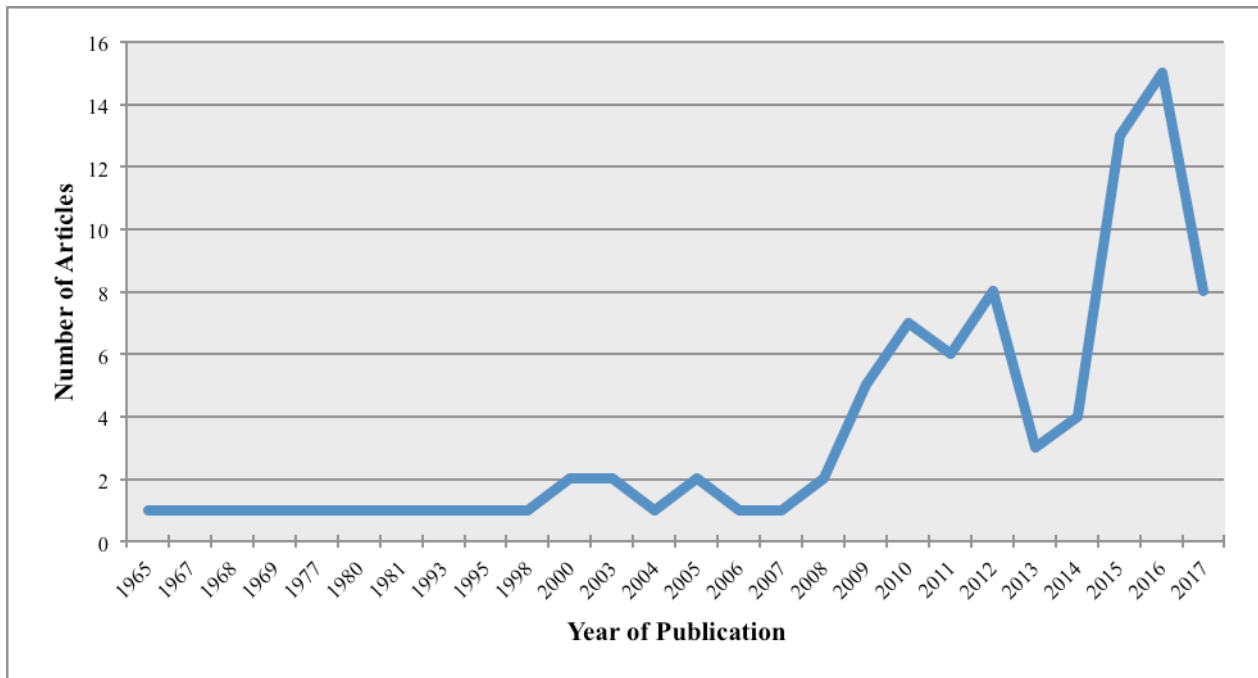


Figure 5. Distribution of articles on race and teacher education by year of publication (from Chapter 1). This figure illustrates a significant change in the number of publications on race and teacher education after 2009. This figure could infer that teachers who were in teacher education programs before 2009 may have had less access to learning about race.

In fact, the data from this study indicated that teachers in this sample who had 10 or more years of experience also tended to report that their teacher education program did not prepare them effectively to discuss race. At the same time, higher reports of preparedness among more experienced teachers in this sample also implies that teachers must have gained experiential knowledge from other sources outside of teacher education. These data suggest that teachers may gain enough experiential knowledge to “feel prepared” to discuss race even if they did not have a teacher education program that was effective for preparing them to engage race. Although some experienced teachers may have autonomously engaged in broadening what they know about race, Grant (1981) would likely disagree, as he found that teachers often struggle with autonomously pursuing equity and justice-centered practices beyond guidance from their instructors. If teachers claim to feel prepared and they have had no formally designed opportunities for learning about race, the nature of their experiential knowledge could be

questionable. That is, how do experienced teachers with no formal learning about race in teacher education actually describe their feelings of preparedness?

The importance of effective teacher education programs should not be dismissed, as the strongest predictor in this study was the teacher education program variable. When teachers in this sample believed their teacher education program was effective in preparing them to talk about race, the odds of feeling prepared for race talk by 4-6 times when compared to teachers who did not believe they had an effective program. Although this study made no attempt to measure teacher education program effectiveness, a teacher's attribution of preparedness to an effective teacher education program could suggest a teacher saw her or his program strengthening her feelings of preparedness for race talk, perhaps, through opportunities to develop experiential knowledge. One could argue there may be confoundedness between "feeling prepared for race talk" and "program effectiveness." Though, the two variables show some correlation, as evidenced by a weakly positive relationship (.28), these two variables have unique relationships with other variables of interest in this study. Moreover, if there were a concerning presence of confoundedness, the two trends shown in Figure 4 would likely reflect beta coefficients with similar magnitudes and directions. This was not the case. However, upon further investigation, a Pearson correlation test revealed that among in-service teachers who had 3 or fewer years of experience, the relationship between preparedness and program effectiveness was much stronger (.62). While this could suggest some confoundedness, the fact that this correlation was only present for a small subgroup of teachers in this sample, particularly those who had 3 or fewer years of experience, I sought no further explanation for this uniquely strong relationship.

One major implication from this study is that teachers tend to feel more prepared by gaining experiential knowledge, whether it occurs inside or outside of teacher education. When teachers, in this sample, had either race-focused teacher education programs or 10 or more years of experience, they were more likely to feel prepared. This means learning opportunities in teacher education programs must be evidence based to increase the chances that teachers will have the skills and knowledge to disrupt, rather than contribute to, racial inequity and injustice. Similarly, learning opportunities for teachers outside of teacher education should be designed to provide real mastery experiences, from an equity-focused perspective, so teachers can engage in real race talk around relevant issues, receive feedback, and then reflect on their feedback.

3.6.2 External Support

The evidence shows that perceptions of parent support (when controlling for race) and administrator support may play a major role in predicting whether or not a teacher feels prepared for race talk. Perhaps the perception of external support allows a teacher to feel more at ease about bringing race into the classroom. This could be the case, as avoiding race talk has been called an implicit social norm (Sue, 2015). Still, in thinking about what it means for teachers' feelings of preparedness to be strongly related to feeling supported by parents and administrators, it is important to acknowledge that how teachers design and enact curriculum may be influenced by external forces, namely oppressive structures that maintain a racialized social system (see Chapter 1). If we lived in a race-conscious society, for instance, would teachers' beliefs and feelings toward race talk significantly differ according to their perceptions of parents or administrators? I argue, probably not. By contrast, if we lived in a color-blind society in which race is neutralized and non-existent, would teachers' beliefs and feelings toward race talk

significantly differ according to their perceptions of parents or administrators? I posit, yes. I believe this data reifies the fact that teachers, whether they are prepared and race-focused or not, still operate within a broader social system that influences what they do and do not do.

A second major implication from this study is that teacher perceptions of administrator and parental support for race talk may play an important role in preparing teachers to engage race in the classroom. That is, teachers may need to be equipped to implement race-centered practices despite their perceptions of parental and administrator support. The broader movement toward disrupting racial inequity and injustice should not be dependent on whether or not a teacher feels supported. Ultimately, this means teachers must have opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and strategies to advance educational equity, especially in school contexts where administrators and parents may not be initially supportive.

3.6.3 Race

Based on the vast literature about White teachers being unprepared to engage race (Watson, 2012), rejecting race in teacher education (Matias, 2013), positioning themselves as oppositional (Ladson-Billings, 1998), and being fearful and uncomfortable (Gay & Howard, 2000), it was surprising that teacher race was not a more significant factor in this study. From a school context perspective, student racial demographic played a small role in predicting feelings of preparedness, albeit in an unexpected way. Unlike prior studies, noting that race was linked to lower self-efficacy (Chu & Garcia, 2014; Natesan & Kieftenbeld, 2013; Rushton, 2003; Siwatu, 2007, 2011), the data in this study showed that teachers who work with a majority student of color population tend to report significantly higher feelings of preparedness than teachers in a

majority White student setting. This finding was consistent across both White teachers and teachers of color.

To reiterate Pollock and colleague's (2010) point that feeling prepared to engage race pre-supposes a teacher acknowledges and accepts that racism exists. Teachers who work with a majority student of color population, according to these data, may be more likely to gain that needed understanding of race and racism. One could argue that working with students of color may provide teachers with more emergent opportunities to gain mastery experiences with race talk, thus improving teachers' feelings of preparedness. In contrast, race and racism may not be emergent issues for White teachers working in White student populations. I have seen no evidence that teachers who work in majority Black or Latino student populations are more or less race-conscious than teachers working in mostly White student populations.

Hypothetically, if opportunities to discuss race are the same for teachers in both White and non-White student settings, the evidence in this study would imply that teachers in White student school settings may not be engaging such opportunities. I feel strongly about this assumption, as feelings of unpreparedness and parental support (compared to teachers in mostly student of color settings) among teachers in White student school contexts are comparatively and significantly lower. Again, if teachers in majority White student populations had and did access opportunities to discuss race, then why are their reported feelings of preparedness, on average, significantly lower than teachers in majority student of color school contexts? The point I am making here about teachers in majority White student settings is: either they have too few emergent opportunities for race talk or they have emergent opportunities for race talk but they avoid engaging.

From a self-efficacy standpoint, teachers in this study may see race talk as a task that is more appropriate for school contexts with mostly Black or Latino students. Bandura (1986) explained that a shift in context could certainly influence how a person perceives her or his ability to perform a given task. Teachers in this study, then, may feel more comfortable and less fearful to engage in race talk according to the student racial demographic of the school. Still, a question is why would teachers' level of comfort and fear, and ultimately, their feelings of preparedness to engage race be significantly weakened or strengthened by a change in student racial demographics? I believe it is not a stretch to suggest that when a teacher feels supported by a parent, she or he is much more likely to feel prepared; but, I am also not discounting the possibility that perceptions of parental support are somehow related to teacher fear that stems from the salience of race. Teachers who do not perceive parents as supportive of race talk might actually be fearful of how parents (in this case, most likely White parents) would respond if they found out teachers were talking about race.

A third implication from this study is that teachers in majority White student settings may be contributing to racial inequity by ignoring race and by signaling to their students that race is not important. Given that feeling prepared to engage race presupposes consciousness of race and racism, the evidence from this study suggests teachers who work in mostly White school settings may not have had opportunities to practice race talk in their teacher education program or they are not accessing emergent opportunities to explore race in their classrooms due to fear of White parents.

3.6.4 Limitations and Future Directions

There are two limitations I want to address that also suggest paths for extending this research. First, this exploratory study relied on a primary source of data via the Teachers Race Talk Survey. One issue that could be raised is the choice in survey design. Typically, when designing a new survey instrument, as I show next, researchers attempt to “measure” or capture participants’ opinions or beliefs in specific domains by recording how accurately specific items in the new survey measure domains to a degree similar to prior instruments. Take teacher self-efficacy as an appropriate example (See Table 5). Prior to their development of the widely used Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) reviewed previous self-efficacy instruments, examined relationships between items and subscales, and, ultimately, concluded the following. After reviewing 8 different instruments that were used for nearly 25 years, three constructs emerged with which they were able to refine and advance more precise measurement items.

Unlike the teacher self-efficacy research, which has existed for quite some time, there were no instruments I found in the literature that centered on understanding teachers’ beliefs and feelings regarding race talk. That means there were neither prior instruments from which to build nor established constructs or domains. Because this study was exploratory, I was less concerned with “measuring,” (especially with no constructs to measure) which is why I used a forced response format of “yes,” no,” or “not sure” options. Given there were not studies involving an instrument of this type, I was also less concerned with variability of outcomes and more focused on an increased number of participants. So, while one alternative could have been to provide scaled response options for participants, such as 4-5 Likert-items, as Bandura (1997) suggested,

it is unclear how a more intensive survey might have decreased the number of willing participants (currently, about 80% of survey participants spent between 10-20 minutes).

Table 5. Summary of Previous Teacher Efficacy Instruments (Adapted from Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001).

Instrument	Format	Sample
Rand measure (Armor et al., 1976)	2 items; indicate level of agreement with a statement	If I try really hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students
Responsibility for student achievement (Guskey, 1981)	30 items; assign a percentage distribution to each of 2 choices (totaling 100)	If a student does well in your class, would it probably be a. because that student had the natural ability to do well, or b. because of the encouragement you offered?
Teacher locus of control (Rose & Medway, 1981)	28 items; choose from 2 choices	Suppose you are teaching a student a particular concept in arithmetic or math, and the student has trouble learning it. Would this happen: a. because the student wasn't able to understand it, or b. because you couldn't explain it very well?
Webb efficacy scale (Ashton et al., 1982)	7 items; determine stronger agreement between first or second statement.	a. A teacher should not be expected to reach every child; some students are not going to make academic progress. b. Every child is reachable. It is a teacher's obligation to see to it that every child makes academic progress.
Ashton vignettes (Ashton et al., 1984)	50 items; rate (a) performance in each situation from "extremely ineffective to extremely effective" and (b) how they compare to other teachers from "much less effective than most teachers" to "much more effective than most teachers"	Your school district has adopted a self-paced instructional program for remedial students in your area. How effective would you be in keeping a group of remedial students on task and engaged in meaningful learning while using these materials?
Teacher efficacy scale (Gibson & Dembo, 1984)	30 items; rate their beliefs using a 6-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.	When a student gets a better grade than he usually gets, it is usually because I found better ways of teaching.
Science teaching efficacy belief instrument (Riggs & Enochs, 1990)	25 items; rate their beliefs on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.	I understand science concepts well enough to be effective in teaching elementary science.
Bandura's teacher efficacy scale (Bandura, 1997)	30 items; rate their beliefs on a 9-point scale anchored at nothing, very little, some influence, quite a bit, a great deal.	How much can you influence the decisions that are made in your school?

The second limitation I address is selection bias (Murnane & Willett, 2010). I realize that not all teachers (across the country) had an equal chance of receiving the invite to participate. I

do recognize that any results and interpretations from this study can only be applied to the sample of teachers who were invited and self-selected into the study. Regarding teachers who received the invite to participate and opted out, I realize non-response bias could be a concern in terms of influencing the findings of this study. However, non-response bias is most critical when researchers use instruments with the purpose of trying to make causal arguments about a specific population (Fan & Yan, 2009). This study was not designed to make causal inferences to a random sample of teachers. Still, in thinking about why teachers may have received the invite to participate and declined, some common reasons noted in the literature suggest teachers might have felt race talk was irrelevant, had no benefit in their school settings, or had too little time to complete the survey (Sturgis, Smith, & Hughes, 2006). Based on these common non-response reasons, I posit that, because these teachers may not see race talk as important in their schools, their responses might have increased the significance of the race variables predicting feelings of preparedness.

While any survey is not without limitations (Groves et al, 2011), the Teachers Race Talk Survey is a novel instrument in the field and could function as a basis for future research. Building on the findings in this study could help advance a deeper understanding of constructs related to teachers' feelings of preparedness to engage race. In fact, for the purposes of triangulation, future research could include an observation and interview component. Semi-structured interviews (Seidman, 2013) could help extend findings in this study by exploring, for instance, why student racial demographic is so greatly related to teachers' feelings of preparedness. Similarly, the findings in this study also lend themselves to the future development of an instrument for accurately capturing teachers' reported beliefs and feelings about engaging race in classroom contexts.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The findings from this study suggest that a more intensive focus on race in teacher education may support teachers' feelings of preparedness to engage race. To the degree that teachers do not have opportunities to explore race in teacher education, they tend to gain experiential knowledge about race either through their own teaching or through other sources of learning. When teachers feel supported by administrators and parents, they may be more likely to engage in race talk with students. As evidenced by the substantially lower perceptions of parental support in mostly White student school settings and significantly higher feelings of preparedness in school contexts with a majority student of color population, this study reiterates, race matters. Moreover, the predictive power of parent and administrator support of teacher race talk is also indicative of the ways in which external forces, such as avoiding race talk, (Sue, 2015) or an over-emphasis on "achievement" gaps and outcomes (Milner, 2012) can influence how teachers design and enact curriculum.

If teachers are prepared to center race in their work, they can build practices to disrupt racial inequities (Milner, 2010). Where standardized tests and accountability measures offer some insight into learning and school success, they may not adequately capture other measures of student success, such as engaging and empowering students to confront and disrupt real world problems (Endo, 2015; Freire, 1970) or developing strong racial identities (Wang & Huguley, 2012). In addition, when teachers are relegated to a scripted curriculum that encourages them to focus on the test (Milner, 2013b), they may miss opportunities to deepen their own understanding of race (Gay & Howard, 2000; Milner, 2012). I hope this study contributes to building teacher education programs that can better support teachers' development of race-

centered practices, improve their feelings of preparedness to engage in important race dialogues with students, and ultimately, move us closer to disrupting racial inequity in schools and society.

4.0 CHAPTER THREE: WHITE TEACHERS' REPORTS OF THEIR BELIEFS AND FEELINGS ABOUT RACE TALK

In this chapter, I use Bonilla-Silva's (2014) Color-Blind Racism framework to analyze open-ended responses from 336 White teachers, a sub-sample of the Teachers' Race Talk Survey (Milner, Delale-O'Connor, Murray & Alvarez, 2016) study. I focus on White teachers' reported beliefs about (1) the importance of discussing race in their classrooms with students, (2) feelings of preparedness to discuss race in their classrooms, and (3) beliefs about discussing police violence on unarmed Black bodies in their classrooms. The data show that the majority of White teachers in the study reported that race is important to discuss with their students in their respective classrooms. However, many reported feeling unprepared to discuss race, often enacting color-blind ideologies and opting to protect their own interests out of fear. Further, some teachers struggled with considering discussions of police violence on Black bodies as their color-blind responses tended to counter their understanding of race as a site of critical consciousness.

Recognizing implications of race in a color-blind society may be difficult for some people, including teachers. Color-blindness is built on the premise of equality of opportunity, thus it attempts to standardize or normalize people as the same regardless of race or color (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, Milner, 2012). Race-neutrality is unrealistic (Milner, 2010), as a teacher who claims to not see race would likely still expect a student to conform to some set of

expectations or practices. Delpit (2006) explained how cultural conflicts could occur when teachers operate from a perspective that does not recognize students' racial or cultural experiences. In a color-blind society, teachers either fight for educational equity for all children or they fight against it (Milner, 2015).

For Friere (1970), fighting for educational equity would require a teacher to have developed critical consciousness, which refers to, "learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (p. 35). In this sense, teachers must learn to recognize that social systems do marginalize people of color. Ignoring race, however, also suggests teachers are ignoring social systems built on the construction of race. Ignoring race could mean teachers are fighting against educational equity by rejecting the way in which institutions have deliberately shaped the lives and realities of many people of color.

Institutions, such as higher education institutions, for example, have operated as oppressive racial structures through colonialism (Wilder, 2013), reconstruction (Brown & Davis, 2009), before and after Civil Rights legislation (Brint & Karabel, 1989), as well as today (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013). Additionally, in 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court, legally sanctioned segregation (see *Plessy v. Ferguson*) and the Jim Crow era of racism centered on discriminatory practices via employment opportunities (Drake & Cayton, 1962), government support (Anyon, 2014), and housing (Gotham, 2000; Rothstein, 2015). Thus, Milner (2015) and Freire (1970) suggest, to fight against educational inequity, teachers must recognize the well-documented history of institutional racism and work to disrupt it by centering race in their teaching.

This study suggested that White teachers who adopt a colorblind orientation to their work may fail to recognize the numerous ways in which race has shaped students' lives and realities.

Whether intentional or unintentional, through their colorblind responses, teachers in this study also demonstrated that they might need more opportunities to explore their own understanding about race. The findings suggest there are implications for preparing teachers to develop racial critical consciousness to prevent adopting colorblind orientations to their work. By developing curriculum opportunities for all teachers, and especially White teachers who may adopt a colorblind orientation, teacher education programs may support teachers' development of racial critical consciousness through exploring, discussing and interpreting their personal experiences, as well as local and broader societal issues of race.

4.1 WHY RACE?

This research demonstrates that race is important for teachers to explore in their practices. In fact, researchers have underscored that teachers need a clear understanding of race—as well as the ways in which schools and society have contributed to racial inequity (Seider & Huguley, 2009; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2012). When teachers adopt a colorblind perspective or have lower expectations and deficit perspectives of students of color, (Milner, 2010) they may intentionally or unintentionally contribute to racial disparities in educational outcomes. For example, Black students are three times more likely to be suspended than White students (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2017; CRDC, 2016). Other evidence has reported that students of color are underrepresented in advance placement, or gifted, programs, (Gay, 2010) and overrepresentation in special education programs (Blanchett, 2006). While these studies link racial disparities in educational outcomes to teachers' beliefs or subjective assessments of students of color, some believe and advance the proposition that these

disproportionalities in school outcomes are the result of students' family and community cultural practices (D'Amico, 2016; Payne, 2013).

There is evidence of several outside of school racial disparities to dispel the notion that students, families, or communities of color should be seen as "deficient" or "culturally deprived." Moreover, these outside of school conditions sometimes influence students' inside of school experiences. For example, students of color have disproportionately high chances of living at or below the poverty line (Milner, 2013a). Accordingly, economic restrictions may dictate where families can afford to live and what schools their children can attend. Poverty, as Milner (2013a) found in his review of literature, can impact students' attendance, enrollment status, and school dependency for resources. Numerous other studies have shown that children of color tend to be over-represented in hyper-segregated communities with limited opportunities for employment, transportation and quality health care (Munin, 2013; Tate, 2008). The research also shows students of color are over-exposed to community and school violence and harsh and harmful living conditions (Burdick-Will, 2013; Fisher, Viano, Curran, Pearman & Gardella, 2017; Kozol, 1995; Milam, Furr-Holden, & Leaf, 2010; Noguera, 2003).

Although evidence of racial disparities inside and outside of school is difficult to ignore, teachers who adopt a colorblind orientation may fail to see the connection between disproportionalities and oppressive systems and beliefs. Given the racial demographic divide between White teachers and students of color (Banks, 2007; Howard, 2010; Milner, 2015), understanding how a majority White teacher population make sense of race could be insightful for developing teacher education curriculum and program designs for better preparing teachers, while disrupting long-standing racial disparities.

Drawing from previous researchers who study race in teacher education (Howard, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Milner, 2008, 2010, 2015; Pollock, Deckman, Mira and Shalaby, 2010), I center this chapter on the following assumption: White teachers who are critically conscious about race may be less likely to demonstrate Color-blind racism in their practices with students. By incorporating Bonilla-Silva's conceptual framework as an interpretive tool for making sense of White teachers' open-ended survey responses, I address the following three interrelated research questions:

Research Question 1: How do White teachers describe the importance of discussing race in the classroom?

Research Question 2: How do White teachers explain their feelings of preparedness to discuss race?

Research Question 3: How do White teachers' beliefs manifest in their decisions to discuss or not discuss police violence toward unarmed Black people?

In the following sections, I share background literature on race and teacher education, as well as conceptual framing using critical consciousness (Freire, 1970) and a Color-Blind Racism framework (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). Additionally, I outline my methodological approach to analyzing teachers' open-ended responses. In the findings section, I share emergent themes related to three key survey items that directly align with my above-referenced research questions. I conclude with implications for curriculum and teacher education programs.

4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW: PREPARING WHITE TEACHERS IN A COLORBLIND SOCIETY

In this section, I begin by discussing race and colorblindness to address conditions and circumstances surrounding the context in which White teachers are prepared. Then, I present literature highlighting both effective teacher education practices and challenges that teacher education programs face in preparing White teachers to engage race. I then draw from two conceptual frameworks that help to explain how White teachers, in a colorblind society, may come to understand and demonstrate their knowledge about race.

4.2.1 Race and Colorblindness

Race is socially, historically, physically (not biologically), and legally constructed (Milner, 2015). Scholars confirm that race, in the U.S., was used as a tool to fabricate racial identity (racialization) for the purpose of building a racialized social system to facilitate the expansion of property ownership and a social system of oppression, racism, and inequity (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Omi & Winant, 2014). By distinguishing different types of human bodies, a racialized social system assigns privileges to Whiteness, while establishing boundaries to determine group membership (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Harris, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2014). Whiteness has been defined by scholars of color as an ideology related to “embodied racial power” (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, p. 193), “master of the world” (Fanon, 1967, p. 128), and “terror” (hooks, 1994, p. 45). Accordingly, interpretations of Whiteness represent power and privilege both interpersonally and systemically.

Whiteness, via power and privilege has shifted how race and racism are deployed. At various historical time points, for example, systemic racism rationalized the enslavement of roughly 8 million Africans (Feagin, 2014), as well as segregationist policies, such as discriminatory practices in employment opportunities (Drake & Cayton, 1962), government funded assistance policies (Anyon, 2014), and housing (Gotham, 2000; Rothstein, 2015). Presently, race scholars suggest power and privilege have shifted racism toward a belief in colorblindness. Bonilla-Silva (2014) theorized, for instance, that a current racial ideology operates as an interpretive tool for (White) people to understand and explain issues of race, such as inside and outside of school racial disparities. A belief that society no longer views color or race as a determining factor in people's lives, I believe, ensures that any advantages accrued from previous phases of systemic racism are protected.

Researchers agree that in a colorblind society the normalization of Whiteness has resulted in a narrow, single way of viewing the world (Bonilla-Silva, Goar & Embrick, 2006; Feagin, 2014; McIntosh, 2004). Consequently, teachers may see students of color as students with no racial identities (Noguera, 2003; Tatum, 1992). For this reason, Milner (2012) wrote extensively about the ways in which colorblindness has influenced the educational opportunities of many students of color. Similarly, Husband (2016) identified six consequences of teacher colorblindness:

- Teachers develop school curriculum without addressing racial representation, which negatively influences what both students of color and White students can learn
- Teachers foster lower expectations of their students of color, which can manifest in students' school outcomes

- Teachers teach all students the same, which may not account for students' prior experiences and knowledge
- Teachers overlook school policies and practices that marginalize students of color, which may result in disparities in school outcomes
- Teachers deemphasize racial differences, which may lead to greater degrees of racial inequality
- Teachers ignore racist attitudes in and among students, which may be ineffective for reducing marginalizing beliefs about students of color (p. 5-9).

As outlined by Husband, Milner and others, a colorblind society promotes a belief that race is inconsequential, which has implications for White students' learning opportunities; yet, colorblindness tends to more significantly impact the school experiences of students of color.

4.2.2 Preparing White Teachers to Engage Race

Given the social and historical context in which many White teachers came to “know” about race, it should not be surprising that White teachers often enter teacher education programs with little to no understanding about race (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Consider, for instance, the implications of segregation and desegregation. Evidence has shown that White people, before and after desegregation tend to live in hyper-segregated communities (Clotfelter, 2006). Even through the mid-1990's, Iceland and Sharp (2013) reported that a White person, on average, lived in a community where 90% of the residents were also White. Studies have found these types of racially isolated communities in which White people live tend to circulate beliefs and stereotypes of other racial group members (Bonilla-Silva, Goar & Embrick, 2006). This means, providing access to opportunities for White teachers to build knowledge about race is an

essential role teacher education programs play in the teacher preparation process (Cochran-Smith, 1995). Evidence shows teacher education programs can deepen White teachers' understanding of race in a few ways. For instance, several studies point to promoting teacher reflection about the social, institutional, historical and individual dimensions of race and discussion as highly effective practices for supporting White teachers in building pedagogies that center race (Milner, 2003; Taylor, 2017). In addition to reflection and discussion on race, studies illustrate how using a race-related curriculum can advance teachers' awareness and consciousness about race (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Matias & Mackey, 2016; Milner, 2017), which may be particularly useful when current and relevant societal issues of race emerge in the classroom (Milner, 2015).

I focus here, for instance, on the persistence of racial violence against Black bodies at the hands of police officers in U.S. society (Hill, 2016; Milner, 2017). By integrating present realities, consider the way in which police violence might be used as a race-related curricular site for deepening teachers' understanding of race and, ultimately, raising White teachers' consciousness. Cassily and Clarke-Vivier (2016) used #FergusonSyllabus to facilitate relevant learning following the shooting of unarmed Black male, Michael Brown, in 2014. In the same way, Berry and Stovall (2013) focused on the killing of Trayvon Martin to center race and injustice in their teaching. Given that teachers may have little to no understanding about race, these studies shed light on how an intentionally focused race-related curriculum can support White teachers' consciousness and movement toward rejecting status quo practices at a systemic level. These studies serve as exemplars of how current and relevant societal issues of race can and should be discussed in classroom contexts from a position that centers race and justice.

Without an intentionally focused curriculum centered on race, White teachers may resort to alternative explanations that do not adequately capture broader social forces operating at deeper levels. For example, White teachers may see police officers killing unarmed Black people as individual acts related to implicit bias. Harris (2016), a White law professor, suggested implicit bias is the unconscious set of beliefs driving police officers' decisions to disproportionately target people of color. Similar discourses involving implicit bias have extended into school contexts to explain various disproportionalities among students of color. Recently, a Yale study found that White teachers' implicit biases are significantly more negative toward students of color (Gilliam, Maupin, Reyes, Accavatti & Shic, 2016), perhaps leading to many unsanctioned disciplinary actions, such as suspension or expulsion (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2016). Of course, implicit bias may partially explain why individual police officers kill unarmed Black people, but it can also minimize how oppressive structures, such as law enforcement agencies, can engage in discriminatory practices (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016), and in my opinion, receive too few consequences.

My point in highlighting how current and relevant societal issues of race may emerge in the classroom is to posit, White teachers' beliefs and understanding about race may influence how they respond to students' inquiries. Moreover, White teachers' beliefs about race could influence whether or not they would allow race-related discussions in the classroom. What is most salient is, to prepare White teachers in an ethos of racism, White teachers must have opportunities to explore race in ways that may challenge their beliefs and understanding of race (Banks, 2007; Milner, 2012; Tatum, 1992).

4.2.3 Challenges with Preparing White Teachers in Teacher Education

Another theme from the literature on race and teacher education concerns challenges the field of teacher education faces with preparing White teacher to center race in their work. Although the previous sections illustrated the importance of teacher education programs preparing White teachers to be critically conscious about race in a colorblind society, several challenges continue to surface. One major issue teacher educators face in preparing White teachers to explore and engage issues of race is resistance (Gay & Howard, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Matias, 2013). Much of this resistance tends to be driven by teachers' inherent positions on race, which tends to be grounded in Whiteness. For instance, Matias and Grosland (2016) shared exemplary models of digital stories highlighting how White teachers in their sample demonstrated an emotional distance, removing themselves from broader implications of race. Deeper still, White teachers often denied the presence of Whiteness and adopted positions of resistance to sharing the burden of race. Perhaps, resistance to learning about race, scholars suggest, could be a function of White teachers' underlying beliefs.

Other studies suggest resistance to learning about race may be an issue of not feeling prepared. Broadly speaking, people tend to perform a task when they feel they can be successful. In the same way, White teachers who are unprepared may report lower feelings of self-efficacy to confront issues of race (Garcia, 2004; Natesan & Kieftenbeld, 2013). Studies also report that White teachers experience discomfort or fear when discussions of race emerge (Brown & Brown, 2012; Buchanan, 2015). Yet, a third possibility, as Sleeter (1993) documented, is White teachers strategically evade race talk. In any case, one concerning issue is, when teachers are unprepared to confront race and broader social inequities, it influences their instructional and discursive practices (Milner, 2003; Freire, 1970).

Despite the challenges teacher education programs face, some argue teacher education programs are still responsible for allowing teachers to exit programs without exploring race (Hayes & Fashing-Varner, 2015). A related and deeper issue, perhaps, is that teacher education programs may struggle with helping White teachers better understand race (Tatum, 1992). To be clear, race has become more prevalent as a site of curricular knowledge in teacher education (see Chapter 1); it is how race is presented that may be seen as problematic. For example, Pimentel (2010) critiqued discussions about racial matters among teachers and teacher educators for minimizing White privilege and placing an overemphasis on overt, “old-fashioned” and individual acts of racism, such as lynching or using profane racial obscenities. In addressing race, some teacher education programs fail to acknowledge how power and privilege operate at a systemic level, which potentially limits what White teachers have an opportunity to learn about race. Likewise, studies illustrate, the way in which White teachers talk about race without using “race words” (Watson, 2012) and instead rely on coded terms, such as diverse, “students who don’t look like me” (p. 998) or “urban” (Gadsden & Roman, 2017).

The bottom line is that teacher education programs must support White teachers in examining aspects of race in their work (Milner, 2010, 2015; Tatum, 1992). However, my argument is the teacher education “structure” itself is an institution that operates within a colorblind society, which does little for disrupting racial inequity in schools (Alvarez, 2017). In fact, higher education institutions in the U.S. have historically operated as oppressive racial structures during colonialism (Wilder, 2013), reconstruction (Brown & Davis, 2009), before and after Civil Rights legislation (Brint & Karabel, 1989), as well as today (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013). The literature makes me wonder, can White teachers really come to a place of “knowing” and understanding race when they are prepared in institutions that have thrived on practices that

marginalize people of color? Sleeter (2017) articulated the teacher education structure centers on Whiteness by catering to White teacher needs (Cook, 2013; Kraehe, 2015), while excluding voices and perspectives of teachers of color (Lam, 2015; Matias, Montoya & Nishi, 2016; Milner, Pearman & McGee, 2013).

The literature sheds light on some limitations of preparing White teachers to engage issues of race, particularly because teacher education programs operate within a social and historical context constructed by race. To further explore this issue, I draw from two frameworks that help to explain how White teachers may come to understand and demonstrate their knowledge about race.

4.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS: CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND COLOR-BLIND RACISM

This analysis is grounded in two connected conceptual frameworks: critical consciousness and colorblind racism. Critical Consciousness, for Friere (1970), refers to “learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (p. 35). Therefore, it is not enough for White teachers to merely believe that racism is wrong; they must also reflect their opposition through asking critical questions of society and engaging in critical discourses with students. What Freire is suggesting is that by teachers signal whether or not they have developed critical consciousness by engaging in disruptive actions, such as discussing societal issues of racial inequity. According to Freire, the alternative would also be true; critically conscious teachers would not engage in practices or talk about societal issues in ways that supported racism or allowed oppressive structures to persist.

Drawing on Freire's work to explore the central issue of teacher education programs as oppressive racial structures, a question might be, are teacher education programs preparing teachers to recognize and disrupt oppressive elements of reality? On one hand, the literature illustrates practices that promote White teachers' development of critical consciousness about race. Meanwhile, another body of literature contends that teacher education programs are grounded in Whiteness. Thus, it is difficult to "know" what influence the present teacher education structure, in a broader sense, may have on White teachers' beliefs and, ultimately, their discursive practices.

I want to suggest that White teachers who are critically conscious about race may be more likely to avoid colorblindness. Bonilla-Silva (2014) outlined a Color-Blind Racism Framework for exploring beliefs and practices that perpetuate racism. He contends that because racism currently exists in a subtler and covert manner, it can often be unrecognizable.

The Color-Blind Racism framework begins with three assumptions. First, *race* is a social construct that has grown to influence people's social and material realities. While I embedded this assumption in the previous section where I defined an ethos of racism, it is worth reiterating that White people benefit immensely from their Whiteness and privileges as they maintain the racial status quo. Second, *racial structures* are described as the various systems in society, such as education and criminal justice systems, which create barriers for people of color, while maintaining privileges for dominant racial group members through the use of power. To illustrate how racial structures operate, consider how the criminal justice system disproportionately targets and incarcerates Black males for non-violent offenses (Alexander, 2010). Whereas previous historical periods of racism operated more explicitly to exclude people of color, exclusionary practices today may rely on inequitable policies embedded in racial structures, as Alexander

demonstrated in her research on mass incarceration, Finally, Bonilla-Silva suggested a *racial ideology* is an underlying frame, or way of understanding the world. Specifically, a racial ideology provides a framework for holding various racial structures in place. Formulating “common sense” meta-narratives, a racial ideology can also be seen as an interpretive framework to explain racial matters (for White people).

By outlining four tenets that emerged from his survey research on racial attitudes in various contexts, Bonilla-Silva (2014) outlined how Color-Blind Racism is operationalized, which I summarize next with examples (p. 76-77),

- Abstract Liberalism- combines ideas from political liberalism (such as equal opportunity) and economic liberalism (such as choice or individualism) to explain racial matters. For example, one might say, “I think racism is wrong, but I oppose programs, such as affirmative action, that may offer preferential treatment based on race because that would not be fair.”
- Naturalization- explains racial matters as “naturally occurring” or “that’s just the way it is.” For example, one might say, “Students in classes, in the cafeteria, or in the corridors of schools will ‘naturally’ self-segregate because people inherently want to be around others who are similar to them.”
- Cultural racism- identifies a person’s or a group’s response to a condition, such as poverty, and tries to label the response as a cultural trait or practice. Payne (2013), for instance, claimed there are hidden rules for poverty, rationalizing a need for teachers to remediate students living at or below the poverty line. One might say, “It is a cultural thing. Poor students are not taught proper language and communication patterns by their families.”

- Minimization of racism- suggests discrimination today is no longer an issue. For example, one might say, “People of color have it much better today, so I don’t think this happened because of his race.”

4.3.1 Current Study

In reviewing the literature, I reflect on the potential shortcomings and illogicality of raising White teachers’ critical consciousness of race in a color-blind racist social context. I center the following inquiry on my assumption that White teachers who are critically conscious about race are less likely to demonstrate Color-Blind Racism. By incorporating Bonilla-Silva’s conceptual framework as an interpretive tool for making sense of White teachers’ open-ended survey responses, I address the following three research questions:

Research Question 1: How do White teachers describe the importance of discussing race in the classroom?

Research Question 2: How do White teachers explain their feelings of preparedness to discuss race?

Research Question 3: How do White teachers’ beliefs manifest in their decisions to discuss or not discuss police violence toward unarmed Black people?

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study considers responses of in-service teachers on the Teachers’ Race Talk Survey (TRTS, Milner, Delale-O’Connor, Murray & Alvarez, 2016) through Qualtrics, an exploratory survey

designed with a research team from the Center for Urban Education at the University of Pittsburgh. Given that the TRTS was self-administered, participants were able to complete the survey in privacy without restrictions on time. Researchers have found self-administered surveys tend to be more representative of participants' actual beliefs or feelings (Groves et al, 2011). The 32-item survey includes 8 demographic items, including teachers' race, students' racial demographic and years teaching. Twelve close-ended items, such as "I believe race is an important topic to discuss in the classroom," aim to get a general sense of teachers' reported beliefs or feelings by offering a forced response option of "yes," "no" or "not sure." Finally, each close-ended item is followed by an open-ended response prompt that prompts participants to elaborate on the previous item's close-ended response selection

4.4.1 Sampling

The TRTS research team and I began sampling locally with the University of Pittsburgh's teacher education program students and alumni. We sent requests to three additional colleagues working in three different teacher education programs/universities in Pittsburgh. Our team connected with local educational networks throughout Pittsburgh. Following our local sampling efforts, we invited all 62 AAU public and private school Deans of Education and/or Directors or Coordinators of Teacher Education Program. Finally, the Literacy Research Association shared the TRTS with its distribution list.

In the first wave, a total of 386 respondents completed the survey: 49% re at the pre-service level and 51% was at the in-service level. The average number of years teaching for in-service teachers was 5.5 years, and 87% of respondents were White, 6% were Black, 3% were Hispanic/ Latinx, 2% were Asian, and 2% self identified as multi-racial or ethnic. In terms of

grade level, 5% of the participants were pre-K, 32% were elementary level, 18% were middle school level, and 45% of all respondents were high school level. Forty-one percent of all participants in the survey were English Language Arts teachers, 14% taught math, 14% taught social studies, 8% taught science and the remaining 23% taught various elective courses, such as business or foreign language.

For the purposes of this study, though, I focused on the 336 White teachers for three reasons. First, they are the majority of my sample. Second, White teachers represent the majority of the national teaching force, about 80 percent (USDOE, 2016) although I am not suggesting that these data are generalizable. Finally, given the social and historical context of racism, I focused on White teachers to explore whether or not teacher education programs are preparing White teachers to be critically conscious about race.

4.4.2 Data Analysis

I focused my analysis on three open-ended items from the TRTS. Using open-ended survey items can help establish a knowledge base, expand on previous close-ended survey items and explore new areas related to the phenomenon under study (Ballou, 2008). The first item I selected was “I believe race is an important topic to discuss in the classroom.” I used this item because it offered an important starting place to understand if any progress, broadly, has been made in openly engaging topics of race. Next, I included the item “I feel prepared to have race conversations in the classroom.” I was interested in knowing how participants explained or rationalized their feelings of preparedness, and, further, if there were connections to their explanations in the first item. Last, I chose the item, “I believe that teachers should discuss police violence against Black people with students.” Including this item was critical because it

addressed a race-specific topic, which has been contested in broader media discourses and under-explored as a curricular site (Berry & Stovall, 2013; Milner, 2017).

I used a membership categorization analysis (Hester & Egler, 1997) to interpret participants' open-ended responses (see Table 1). It is important to note, though, the total number of open-ended responses (units of analysis) for each survey item varied. One reason for this was that I excluded all open-ended responses that were fewer than 2 sentences, particularly because these types of responses lacked interpretability. For instance, I excluded open-ended responses, such as "we discuss race and identity in my class." The other reason my total number of units of analysis was impacted was because of participant non-response; some teachers provided no rationale or explanation for their closed-ended responses. Take the first item for example, of the 336 participants, only 262 offered open-ended responses. With the basic descriptive data in Table 1, I also show the number of open-ended responses I analyzed by item and response type.

I organized the open-ended responses by survey item using a spreadsheet. Next, I read all open-ended responses (3 sets of responses for 3 survey items), and made open-coding notes in the cell to the right of each excerpt, such as "controversial topic" or "fearful of what parents might say." After several passes, I searched for patterns among the codes in each survey item. In the following section, I highlight prominent themes by survey item.

Table 6 Proportion of Item Responses Among White Teachers and Number Of Coded Open-Ended Responses

Survey Item	Yes	No	Not Sure
1. I believe that race is an important discussion topic in the classroom	.88	.05	.07
-Number of analyzed open-ended responses	232	13	17
2. I feel prepared to have race conversations in the classroom	.32	.34	.34
-Number of analyzed open-ended responses	75	71	95

Table 6 continued

3. I believe that teachers should discuss police violence against Black people with students	.35	.34	.31
-Number of analyzed open-ended responses	92	76	77

4.5 FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

I outline this section by highlighting emergent themes by survey item. The first subsection describes patterns in participant responses to the item “I believe that race is an important discussion topic in the classroom.” The second subsection reflects themes related to the item “I feel prepared to have race conversations in the classroom.” The final subsection represents emergent themes related to the item “I believe that teachers should discuss police violence against Black people with students.” As I share representative examples related to themes, I also draw on the Color-Blind Racism framework to help explain teachers’ responses.

4.5.1 Discussing the Importance of Race

Two prominent themes reflected how White teachers in this sample described the importance of discussing race in the classroom. For the most part, there was very little variation in how this sample of White teachers responded to this survey item. White teachers reported that talking about race was either important for unlearning and disrupting prior beliefs or unnecessary in the classroom context.

4.5.1.1 Race is important for unlearning and disrupting

Almost all the White teachers in this study reported that they believed race is an important discussion topic. A recurrent theme for this reasoning was that race talk could provide students and teachers with opportunities to reflect on and possibly address their understandings of race that they have developed through societal influence and personal experiences. For instance, one teacher wrote:

When I reflect, I can see that most of my cultural beliefs have been delivered to me through the reality of other members in my community, the media, and my own limited perceptions through reality as I see/saw it. (ID-383)

This teacher demonstrates a sense of new understanding about the importance of race by recalling how their perceptions were different in the past. Moreover, this teacher appears to admit that their community and media perceptions about race were once negative or deficit-oriented.

The majority of teachers in the study, too, shared the importance of connecting outside of school student experiences with those inside of school and also helping students understand systemic racism. These links are important as we consider outside of school racial violence against Black bodies, for instance. Working to create a seamless transition for students between home and school, teachers stressed the importance of critical discussions with their students:

It is something my students and their families talk about every day. They need to know that it is okay for that conversation to continue outside of their home and immediate circle. Race has had and continues to have an immense impact on all of our lives. This needs to be not just acknowledged, but also taught. If we are truly preparing our students

for the world they will be living in, that includes preparing them to fight systemic racism, and to prepare them for the injustices they will be facing that they do face. (ID-327)

While this teacher addresses the importance of race as a reality for students, there is also a sense of over-essentialization. Although it is possible that students talk about race with their families “everyday,” it is unclear how this teacher came to such a conclusion. While many teachers reported on the importance and relevance of discussing race in the classroom with their students, others found it unnecessary.

4.5.1.2 Discussing race is unnecessary

Although not as prevalent as those who believe race was important to discuss, some teachers reported that race was not important to discuss. These teachers tended to rely on stereotypical conceptions of “low-income” lifestyles and problematically reported that students needed to see people outside of their communities (who have had similar lifestyles as they) become successful. A real problem with this type of “cultural racism” (Bonilla-Silva, 2014) was the assumption that there were no “successful” people already in the community, as one teacher noted:

I would like to show them inspiring true stories (including having speakers come) who are of various non-Caucasian ethnic backgrounds to show them that they are capable of breaking out of their current, low-income lifestyles. Students experience gang activity and are tempted by it, so they need to see that people from their same upbringing have become successful... if they stay focused and productive during their academic careers. (ID-194)

This teacher presents one common aspect of color-blindness by illustrating how through effort and merit, students of color can be successful. Similar teacher responses also reflected a vague

explanation of what it means for students to be “successful.” In this and similar examples of *cultural racism*, a few teachers essentialized students of color by implying they share identical experiences as others from “low-income” backgrounds.

Additionally, a few educators in the study reported that they were unsure about the importance of race talk in the classroom with their students. These teachers tended to report that race was either unrelated to a particular class they taught (mostly mathematics) or simply not a factor that should be considered in the classroom. To illustrate, one math educator shared:

I am to teach students how to develop a mathematical mindset and improve their math skills. While I would call out students that use racial slurs or are negative to another student in anyway, I would not find it necessary to talk about race in a math class. (ID-25)

Unsure whether or not there is value in discussing race, this math teacher implied that addressing race was conditional, namely to reprimand or “call out students” using racial slurs. Furthermore, the teacher’s perception of acceptable race talk was geared more toward explicit racism, which also represents *minimization of racism*. That is, he would likely overlook situations that were not blatantly or overtly connected to race. For teachers who do not see race as an important topic, I suspect there could be an association with their level of comfort or preparedness. Nonetheless, believing that race is an important discussion topic represents progress, and perhaps evidence of critical consciousness, but I found that feelings of preparedness to discuss race posed a different set of challenge for teachers in this study.

4.5.2 Feeling Prepared for Race Talk

Moving from believing race is an important topic to actually feeling prepared to participate in such talks was drastically different. In this section, I present three themes describe how White teachers in this sample explained their feelings of preparedness to discuss race. The majority of the sample reported feeling unprepared to engage race, which they connected to fear or discomfort. Among the small sub-sample of teachers who reported feeling prepared to engage race, the majority attributed their preparedness to self-study and personal experiences. With so few teachers reporting feeling prepared, teacher education programs may need to do a much better job of building teachers' knowledge about race to enact discursive race talk in the classroom, especially for the purposes of disrupting racial inequity.

4.5.2.1 Unpreparedness and fear

Most common among educators who felt unprepared was what they described as fear. More specifically, teachers' responses seemed to suggest that they have not had experience with race talk. Worried about students' parents, concerned about potentially mishandling sensitive race-centered conversations and fear of jeopardizing their teaching jobs were all concrete reasons many teachers reported related to their feelings of unpreparedness to discuss race. One teacher shared:

Even in the education field, it is a subject that is avoided like the plague. No one wants to risk her job because of an angry parent or student, no one wants to create chaos in a classroom that is usually serene, no one wants to face dissonance, be uncomfortable, in a space that is usually safe. Therefore, materials on the subject of race are limited, as no

one talks about it so no one shares information, videos, and articles about it with one another. (ID-401)

From Bonilla-Silva's (2014) perspective, White teachers in this study who sought to protect their own interests are enacting an abstract form of liberalism. Specifically, White teachers can choose to opt out of discussing race with students to avoid discomfort or fear, and, essentially, put their own needs first.

Similarly, educators who were unsure about their level of preparedness reflected fear of potential conflict with peer teachers, administrators and students. Preparation, in this sense, may not necessarily center on discussions about race with students alone; rather, preparedness may also be undermined by a teacher's uncertainty about how to actually discuss race in and beyond the classroom. One elementary educator captures this sentiment:

Although I am very firm in my convictions, I still don't know how to address these problems once I am in a classroom. I don't feel *comfortable* with this [and] I would not know how to address this with the administration of a school without fear of losing my job. I wish my grad program addressed these things. (ID-241)

As this excerpt demonstrates, teachers' fear of losing their jobs tends to outweigh their beliefs, or "convictions." Teachers fear parents, administrators, and losing their jobs, but they also struggle with a fear of not knowing how to discuss race without upsetting students, as the following teacher shares:

Sometimes I'm not sure how to phrase things or how much should I'll be discussed. I'm also White so I am scared my students will see the hateful things other White people do and think I would do those terrible things. (ID-310)

Teachers in this sample who did not report feeling prepared to discuss race identify fear as a primary reason. Teachers' fear may stem from an implicit social norm suggesting race talk is inappropriate (Sue, 2015).

4.5.2.2 Prepared as a result of independent-study

Few teachers in this study reported feeling prepared to engage in race talk. Surprisingly, teachers almost never referred to their teacher education program as their source of feeling prepared. Instead, it was much more common for teachers to credit their preparedness to their own independent-study. I refer to the theme self-study, to describe common responses highlighting teachers' reading, attending conferences, learning online, and reading news posts. This theme also demonstrates how teachers attribute their success and feelings of preparedness to their individual efforts. For instance, one elementary teacher of 22 years shared:

I have studied, read, conversed, had trainings, attended workshops, lectures... over the past 10 years. Of course I am still learning and growing as a teacher, woman and social justice crusader! ps- I am a rare case! MOST, almost ALL teachers I know are not doing this work and they need to! (ID-306)

This experienced teacher, who works in a racially diverse student setting, implies that intensive self-study explains her heightened sense of race-consciousness. Many other teachers echoed this sentiment, as a high school social studies teacher explained, "I've done a fair amount of self-exploration in this arena, and a fair amount of reading on the subject, so I feel like I can handle the challenges of the topic" (ID-343). Teachers who accentuate independent-study as a central component of feeling prepared for race talk also tend to demonstrate features of abstract liberalism, specifically individualism and meritocracy. Individualism and meritocracy, as

Bonilla-Silva (2014) explained, align with a belief associated with competition, ego-centrism, and a general sense of one's success being tied to the hard work and effort she or he has invested.

Building on the previous abstract liberal features, I also found that teachers described their self-study of race as a fixed feature of their pedagogical repertoires. Take for instance a middle school math teacher, who explained, "I am a well-read individual who keeps up with current news. I am as prepared as anyone with my background can be" (ID-181). In many ways, teachers associated their self-study of race to a sense of mastery. I observed this among White teachers who taught in a majority White student setting, such as the previously mentioned middle-school math teacher, and in majority Black student school settings, such as the high school English language arts teacher who responded, "I am well-read in perspectives of POC (people of color) on these issues" (ID-135).

In contrast, it was rare that teachers highlighted independent study as an on-going journey. However, working in a majority White student population, one high school English language arts teacher of 15 years explained:

Yes, but this is not an end state of being...I quickly acknowledge that saying I am prepared to have such conversation suggests that preparation is an end point, as if one read certain books or studied the issue and he/she is now prepared - no more education or preparation is needed. I am prepared to open the door, but further experience, reading of research, discussion, and work must continue. I feel prepared, but know that preparation is an ongoing process. (ID-218)

While the majority of teachers identified independent study as an explanatory source of preparedness, few teachers described independent study using a tone of humility and in a way that positioned them, the teacher, as an ongoing learner trying to understand race.

4.5.2.3 Preparedness and personal experiences

Along with connecting feelings of preparedness to self-study, many White teachers suggested their personal experiences (outside of school) prepared them for race talk. I found that some experiences were “blinding” and others were “enlightening.” By blinding experiences, I am suggesting that teachers may misinterpret their experiences as sites of critical knowledge about race. In a similar way, Taylor (2017) described how White teachers’ *racial touchstones* (experiences related to race and sometimes culture from which teachers draw) could be used to approximate yet underestimate the nature of race and racism. Unlike blinding experiences, “enlightening” experiences represent teacher experiences linked to reflection or recognition of power and privilege.

Blinding experiences tend to reflect a sense of essentialization or cultural racism. In other words, blinding experiences are representations of one situation or event that teachers may use to generalize. For example, in explaining from where feeling prepared to talk about race emerged, a White high-school math teacher explained:

My husband and I took in an African American teenager from Memphis for his senior year of HS. He is currently a senior at the University of Rochester. We continue to be quite active in his life, to the point where he asked me to assist his younger brother who is a HS senior in Memphis with his college application process. I learned a lot about what it means to be a young African American male, and it grieves my heart where the state of race relations is in our country. (ID-313)

I am not arguing that this teacher learned or did not learn from this experience. I am, however, identifying this as a blinding experience because, as a result, this teacher may use this

experience-adopting a Black boy-as evidence to “know” what Black boys need, and thereby generalizing based on a limited scope of knowledge about one Black boy.

As a source of preparedness, teachers described experiences that may have blinded them from understanding the complexity of race. To illustrate, a White high-school English teacher of 21 years pointed to a number of experiences that may have been blinding:

I have read innumerable books about minority experiences (I live vicariously through books), I am married to a religious minority, I live in a racially and ethnically diverse neighborhood, I have lived abroad, and I have taught in multiple communities where I was the ethnic minority (majority Latino and majority African-American). I feel very comfortable around everyone; we all have a shared humanity, don't we? (ID-291)

Teachers' reported preparedness tended to be linked to experiences related to a person of color they know or teachers' interpretation of a text about race. It was also common for teachers to relate their feelings of preparedness to “a racially diverse family” (White, high-school science teacher, ID-292), “liv[ing] many places and hav[ing] friends who have shared many experiences” (White, high-school music teacher, ID-307), and having “seen diverse classrooms, worked with large populations of minority students and hav[ing] a degree in History, requiring me to have studied several ethnic groups in detail” (White high-school social studies teacher, ID-446).

Even with firm beliefs, preparing educators to discuss race may need to extend to working through fear and discomfort related to how teachers interact with other adults in and around school. For teachers who report feeling prepared, they often attribute their preparedness to their own self-study and personal experiences. Probing and attempting to understand teachers' beliefs about the importance of race talk and their feelings of preparedness was an important focus of this research. I also wanted to get specific with particular curriculum sites that had direct

links to societal racial issues, namely police violence against Black bodies. I found this aspect of my study was informative, as I show next, for gaining a sense of White teachers' level of consciousness to recognize and actively disrupt racial inequity.

4.5.3 Discussing Police Violence Against Black People

Unlike teachers' responses to the importance of race and preparedness to discuss race, teachers' responses to police violence reflected what Bonilla-Silva (2014) would call a color-blind approach, regardless of their close-ended responses. That is, when White teachers rationalized their "yes" or "no" responses to this survey item, their explanations reflect a shared belief that could support the racial status quo. The data suggest that teacher education programs may not be tapping deep enough into White teachers' underlying beliefs. Next, I present three prominent themes that capture how White teachers' beliefs manifest in their decisions to discuss or not discuss police violence toward unarmed Black people.

4.5.3.1 Police violence and absolute facts

Many White teachers in this sample take an objective stance on the issue of police brutality. For example, teachers frame their responses about discussing police violence according to the "facts." From my perspective, teachers' objective stances and "fact-based" approaches may be protective mechanisms. In other words, teachers detach themselves from the issue of police killing unarmed Black people to avoid having to claim a position. For example, one teacher wrote:

Although it is difficult, these topics are absolutely essential. Especially in the wake of these instances, *students should have a safe space where they can learn the absolute facts away from the biases of their loved ones or the media.* (ID-016)

Without question, teachers appear to realize police brutality is wrong. In fact, as the previous excerpt demonstrates, teachers want children to feel safe in discussing police brutality. A problem, though, is that teachers expect the “facts” to represent a whole truth. For instance, another teacher shared, “Older students ask questions and *if teachers don't tell them facts, they may hear a one sided story from their parents or other family*” (ID-117). Rather than allowing narratives to count as data, teachers in this sample defer to “facts” as a singular source of data. Consider another example:

All students are already aware of violence against Black people, women, & others of color. *It is better to talk about these issues in a community of learners to get the facts rather than relying on poor media choices or word of mouth.* (ID-114)

What teachers may not realize about a social and historical context grounded in oppressive racial structures, “facts” provide a limited source of information. I found that, by prioritizing facts as the basis for discussing police brutality, teachers were suggesting that parents’ and families’ lives and realities were not valued as sources of knowledge. In fact, I interpreted this response as a form of silencing. Freire shared similar insights, suggesting that engaging in dialogue is a form of knowledge building. Thus, teachers who rely on facts alone and silence students may be engaging in color-blind practices that perpetuate inequity.

4.5.3.2 Police violence as a natural occurrence

While almost all White educators in this sample believed that race is an important discussion topic in the classroom, far fewer responded affirmatively to discussing racial violence.

Unexpectedly though, I discovered a range of rationales for discussing violence on unarmed Black bodies; creating space to discuss such violence was an opportunity for teachers to reinforce the status quo and completely negate the criticality of race, racism, and discrimination in society (and schools!). For example, one teacher explained how violence might be avoided if young Black males submit to the authority of the law:

Students should understand *they have the right to protest, but it can't be violent or destructive*. Students should understand that *they need to obey an officer's commands* during traffic stops...They should also understand that being civil can usually lead to less serious charges. (ID-214)

This type of common response, I posit, may implicitly convey a colorblind racist ideology. Suggesting that students need to learn how to “obey an officer’s commands” fails to acknowledge the questions as well as the socio-political and historical issues related to unarmed Black bodies being killed. Further, it is difficult to foresee how some students may interpret this type of teacher response, as it communicates, clearly, that power belongs to police officers—and entities supporting this “pattern or practice of conduct that violates the Constitution or federal law” (p. 3), to borrow language from a recent report on excessive police force (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). Building on this rationale for discussing racial violence, other teachers affirmed the need to balance the discussion, perhaps, to be fair for police officers:

It is valuable to discuss these all-too-frequent violent incidents, I also feel that it should be paired with discussions of how the police are meant to protect us and that their daily, life-threatening jobs contribute to how they react in such situations and that if we don't want our law enforcement to assume all minorities are violent, drug-dealing criminals, then stop that stereotype existing as truth. (ID-204)

Simultaneously, this affirmative response reflects an increased focus on and empathy toward overstressed officers, while at the same time a reduction in empathy for people of color who are the victims of violence. Again, I noticed the liberalist notion of fairness, as described by Bonilla-Silva (2014); that is to say, White teachers in this study often saw a need to pair discussions of police violence with an overemphasis on the stress that police experience. From this seemingly objective standpoint, discussing this form of racial violence could be more detrimental to the sense-making process of youth and potentially more so for Black students who might be experiencing vicarious trauma due to their direct or indirect connections to those who have been killed.

4.5.3.3 Minimizing the role race plays in police violence

White teachers who responded “no” or “not sure” to discussing police violence on Black people viewed police violence as too controversial and, therefore, believed it should be filtered or avoided altogether. I call special attention to what students may be learning based on what teachers choose not to discuss. An elementary teacher elaborates on this point:

I think teachers should not ignore that those issues are going on, but I think it is too controversial of a topic to bring up in a school setting. It would suffice to tackle racism in broader, less controversial terms for elementary school students. No reason to invite a "blue lives matter vs. Black lives matter" moral dilemma when "racism is wrong" needs to be reinforced. (ID-163)

This excerpt represents how many White teachers attempted to water down race-centered discussions and lean towards avoidance. Bonilla-Silva (2014) argued that abstract liberalism is characterized, for instance, by claiming racism is wrong, while enacting practices that allow racism to persist. Equally important, referring to *police killing unarmed Black bodies* as “those

issues,” perhaps signals how some White teachers may be detached from what others may see as a societal concern. Still, this excerpt reflect how teachers who feel “racism is wrong ” may prefer to keep race-specific discussions vague and themselves as objective as possible.

White teachers also chose to avoid talking about police killings by arguing that it is either the students’ parents’ responsibility or other teachers’ responsibility. For instance, a math teacher provided an example of how teachers put the onus on others, thus minimizing racism:

There is a time and a place for this to happen. I'm not sure the math classroom is that place. English, social studies, yes. It's difficult enough covering math concepts in a math classroom to take time away to discuss social concepts. That does not mean that if the topic arises, it should be brushed off. I don't think it's the place for a math teacher with a 42-minute class period to choose to devote class time to ANY non-math topic. (ID-226)

I noticed that many teachers in this sample considered it the responsibility of others to create dialogical spaces for race talks. In terms of addressing racial violence—what the sample of teachers referred to as a non-curricular item—“if the topic arises,” I found that most teachers’ discussion about race would likely be minimized or completely pushed aside due to their perceptions that subject matter curriculum such as mathematics should trump students’ needs to debrief on real social events. My analyses suggested that teachers believed that racism, discrimination, the killing of unarmed Black people, and other social problems were less important or would magically disappear in the math classroom.

4.6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on what I have learned from a sample of 336 White teachers, I highlight three implications that address the advancement of teacher education programs working to prepare teachers to center race in their work. First, most White teachers in this sample saw race as an important topic to discuss, indicating, perhaps, a positive movement toward critical consciousness. As Freire (1970) noted, critical consciousness begins with acknowledging and recognizing societal [racial] inequities. Thus, White teachers believing race is important to discuss can be seen as progress. With the exception of few, this sample had a shared understanding that race talks with students were important to advance teachers' understanding of race. However, racial critical consciousness is not restricted to beliefs alone; rather, it calls for action, such as facilitating or participating in dialogues, to disrupt oppressive systems and structures

Second, teachers in this sample expressed a need for deeper knowledge of race and experiences to work through fear, what teachers described as a primary contributor to feeling unprepared to actually engage in race talk with their students. Fear tended to emerge from teachers' beliefs that race is too controversial or that they as teachers would lose their jobs if they talked about race. In essence, fear influenced this some White teachers to abandon critical consciousness by sidestepping dialogical opportunities to problematize racial inequities. From Bonilla-Silva's (2014) perspective, teachers' fear may be grounded in individualism, influencing how they approach broader social, institutionalized and structural issues of race. In other words, despite teachers' agreeing that race was important to discuss, they tended to exercise individualism and expression of choice to protect their interests and not necessarily their students' needs or interests. It is also important to recognize the possibility that for some teachers, expressing fear is a race-evasive strategy (Sleeter, 1993). Nonetheless, teachers' fear to

confront race can ultimately be seen as a systemic issue related to the ways in which teacher education programs incorporate or exclude race as a site of curricular knowledge (Hayes & Fashing-Varner, 2015). Still, I believe these analyses of individual teachers' reports are essential in drawing meaning from a collective group and understanding that individuals make systems (Milner, 2015).

Thirdly, the data showed that when specific topics of race emerge, such as police violence on Black people, White teachers' latent beliefs reflected colorblind ideologies. In contrast to my initial point about White teachers' consciousness raising, I caught sight of how teachers described police violence on unarmed Black people as either a natural occurrence or by minimizing the influence of race, to use Bonilla-Silva's (2014) words. That is, many White teachers in the sample claimed that race is important, while simultaneously perpetuating racism through their discursive practices.

What teachers believe about race, how they feel about discussing race and the ways in which they talk about race can represent an ideology that either supports or rejects the racial status quo. Sue (2015) has argued that there is a conflict between how White and Black people see, understand and experience race. Therefore, when White teachers claim, "race is important" or "racism is wrong," it may reflect a level of urgency and meaning that is not critically conscious. Along these lines, Critical Whiteness studies and second wave Whiteness pedagogies continue to explore the ways in which White teachers learn about race and racial identity (Mason, 2016) to disrupt structural racism (Adair, 2008; Jupp, Berry & Linsmire, 2016; Matias & Grosland, 2016).

Building on the implications from this study, teacher education programs could incorporate ways to raise teachers' *racial critical consciousness* in an attempt to avoid teachers

adopting colorblind orientations and practices. Drawing on a framework used for investigating consciousness about race in educational contexts, Milner (2007) provided one approach to developing racial critical consciousness. I am suggesting that the four tenets Milner outlined can be specifically designed for teacher educators to support teachers' development of racial critical consciousness. According to Milner's framework, which I slightly adapted, teachers may develop racial critical consciousness by:

- (a) reflecting on their racial identity and experiences and the way in which their identity construction might influence how they see and understand the world and people.
- (b) exploring students' racial identities and experiences and the way in which students' and teachers' worldviews may conflict.
- (c) engaging in co-reflection, reflection between teachers and students, on local and national issues related to race and students' experiences.
- (d) shifting from teacher (self) to system by learning to focus on how race and racism may influence structures and opportunities for students and students' families.

Teacher educators might consider using a racial critical conscious framework to design instructional practices, curriculum courses, and learning opportunities. For instance, teacher educators might incorporate what Freire (1970) referred to as *Problem Posing*. Freire suggested posing problems related to real issues that students face in their present reality through using visual or textual representation on which a following dialogue would center. After the dialogue, teachers are called to interpret language students used to make meaning of issues related to the

dialogue. Problem posing is one curricular approach that I believe fits the four tenets I described above in Milner's (2007) framework.

Drawing on this study, consider another practical example of problem posing as an instructional activity for developing racial critical consciousness. Teacher educators might pose problems related to race, racism, or police brutality to their teacher education students using a visual image of Michael Brown (the unarmed Black boy who was killed) or Darren Wilson (the White police officer who killed Michael Brown). Then, teachers would be asked to respond to the "problem" of police violence. Following the dialogue, teacher educators would analyze teachers' discourse and revisit how linguistic structures bear ideological beliefs. Relative to this study, teacher educators might identify the particular parts of teachers responses that symbolize color—blindness, for example, and offer new linguistic structures teachers can use.

My analyses suggest that White teachers in this sample may not be accessing the knowledge and skills necessary for them to understand and work through fear associated with confronting race. Teacher education programs have the potential to help expose not just White teachers but all teachers to readings, interactions, and other learning opportunities that help cultivate conscious about race and critically engaged educators committed to centralizing – not marginalizing – justice-centered issues, such as race, racism, discrimination and the killing of Black bodies. A strategically designed race-related curriculum is essential to helping teachers in teacher education programs and beyond in building critical consciousness. This consciousness can carry into their practices with real students who experience real and relevant social issues. The findings stress the exigency of teacher education to play a role in supporting teachers to build the kinds of knowledge necessary for consciousness raising and actively engaging in race

talk in the classroom with their students. Still, I am left wondering whether or not the present teacher education structure can, in fact, promote race-consciousness among White teachers.

However, in reflecting on the potential shortcomings and illogicality of raising White teachers' race-consciousness in the present teacher education context, I pose broader questions related to the evolving knowledge base for teaching: (1) How can teachers move from believing that race is "important" to actively discussing race; (2) What do teachers need to know to feel prepared to engage in race talks; and (3) How do teachers' beliefs and feelings about race manifest in their discursive practices? I see the issues discussed in this chapter as essential and emphasize that teacher education programs and curriculum must be committed to building knowledge about race with teachers if we have a fighting chance of helping to eradicate racism in schools and society.

5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this dissertation was to contribute to theory, research and practice by examining teachers' self-reported beliefs related to the importance of discussing race with students in their classroom, their feelings of preparedness to engage in such race dialogues, their perceptions of their teacher education programs, and their perceptions of administrator and parental support for engaging in race talks with students. I hoped to gauge how best to support teachers in building instructional practices that center race based on what teachers described as their beliefs and feelings about race and teaching. After reviewing the extant literature on race and teacher education and conducting two empirical studies examining teachers' reported beliefs and feelings toward engaging issues of race talk in their classrooms, I argue that opportunities to learn about race in teacher education programs are essential for preparing teachers to disrupt racial inequity inside and outside of schools. To be clear, much of this work in the preparation of teachers points to supporting teachers in building the mindsets – beliefs, ideologies, and feelings necessary to construct a classroom environment that fosters race dialogue (Milner, 2015). In this chapter, I further discuss and support the aforementioned points (and findings from previous chapters) by summarizing findings from each chapter. Then, I conclude with implications for theory, practice and future research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

In chapter 1, the articles on race and teacher education that I reviewed illustrated a noticeable gap between the roles that teacher educators and institutions play in supporting teachers to build race-centered practices. Moreover, the research I reviewed pointed to a need to more closely examine the interconnectedness between and among teacher educators and institutional practices. While some teacher education programs have made efforts to prepare teachers to build race-centered practices, the historical presence of Whiteness may counter the efforts of teacher educators who design race-related curriculum and use various race-related frameworks to inform teachers' practices. I posited that the institutional presence of Whiteness and racism embedded in some teacher education programs could have a stronger influence on shaping teachers' beliefs, feelings, and, ultimately, practices than race- and equity-focused teacher educators. In addition, based on my analysis of the literature, I noted that there might be too few teacher educators engaging in the movement to support teachers to be race-centered. My review of literature illustrated that there are paradoxical forces at work in the context of developing race-centered teachers in many teacher education programs. Drawing on this review of literature, I share some implications for teacher education programs and practices in the implications section below.

In chapter 2, I explored teachers' reported beliefs about race talk and feelings of preparedness to engage in race talk. The data showed that teachers tend to feel more prepared to discuss race by gaining experiential knowledge, whether it occurred inside or outside of teacher education. Although I expected that teachers' perceptions of teacher education program effectiveness would significantly predict teachers' reported preparedness, I found that an effective teacher education program may be much more important for teachers' feelings of preparedness if they have 3 or fewer years of teaching experience. Evidence from this study

showed that teachers with more than 10 years of experience were much more likely to report feeling prepared; yet, these more experienced teachers also tended to report that their teacher education program did not prepare them effectively to discuss race, implying their higher reports of preparedness were from sources outside of teacher education.

Additionally, the second chapter illustrated the salience of race in school settings. For instance, teachers who taught in mostly non-White student settings were significantly more likely to feel prepared for race talk. One could argue that working with students of color may provide teachers with more emergent opportunities to gain mastery experiences with race talk, thus improving teachers' feelings of preparedness. However, if opportunities to discuss race were the same for all teachers, then why were reported feelings of preparedness for teachers in mostly White student settings, on average, significantly lower than teachers in majority student of color school contexts? I argued it was the salience of race. Similarly, the results from this study showed that the impact of parental support for race talk—although a significant predictor of preparedness for race talk—was dependent on whether or not a teacher worked in a majority White school setting. In other words, the “effect” of having parental support was a stronger predictor of preparedness for race talk if a teacher worked in a majority White student school setting than if a teacher worked with mostly children of color.

In chapter three, I examined how White teachers, in particular, described their reported beliefs of the importance of discussing race, reported feelings of preparedness to discuss race, and their reported beliefs about discussing police violence on Black people. While most teachers appeared to have an emergent level of critical consciousness, as they reported race was important, many teachers had experiences to work through what they described as fear. Fear tended to emerge from teachers' beliefs that race is too controversial or that they as teachers

would lose their jobs if they talked about race. In essence, fear influenced this some White teachers to abandon critical consciousness by sidestepping dialogical opportunities to problematize racial inequities. I discovered that teachers tended to exercise individualism and expression of choice to protect their interests and not necessarily their students' needs or interests, which I found to be reflective of broader societal influence. I questioned, if we lived in a race-conscious society, would teachers be fearful about discussing race—a topic most teachers agree is important? I argued, probably not. By contrast, if we lived in a color-blind society in which race is supposedly neutralized and non-existent, would teachers fear talking about race?

In the third chapter, many teacher responses regarding police violence seemed to counter their initial critically conscious beliefs about the importance of race, as evidenced by a color-blind orientation to understanding and explaining racial matters. Given the research on Whiteness in teacher education (Sleeter, 2017), I posited that teachers' color-blind orientations could have been cultivated in their teacher education programs. Another possibility for teachers' counter-intuitive responses could be related to an orientation they already had prior to entering teacher education. Liggett (2008) found that teachers' conceptualizations of race are related to their personal experiences, societal influence (e.g. media, stereotypes), and their teacher education programs. In other words, if teachers enter teacher education programs with a color-blind orientation and they learn nothing about race in teacher education, then they may exit teacher education with about the same level of racial knowledge. As a result, some color-blind teachers may unknowingly contribute to racial inequity due to unanticipated or unforeseen dangers associated with not being prepared to center race in their work (Milner, 2007).

5.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE: DEVELOPING TEACHERS' RACIAL CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

In this section, I begin by revisiting the conceptual frameworks I incorporated throughout this dissertation. Then, I offer a theoretical approach for teacher education programs to support teachers in building race-centered practices, namely through developing teachers' *racial critical consciousness*. I outline 3 inter-related concepts, which draw from prior literature and findings from this dissertation. Finally, as I discuss each concept, I offer implications for practices in teacher education programs.

By drawing on the concept of self-efficacy and a Color-Blind Racism framework to organize and analyze data from the empirical studies I presented in chapters two and three, I was able to develop theoretical insights related to supporting teachers in building instructional practices that center race. For instance, although this dissertation did not measure any self-efficacy, the concept of self-efficacy was useful for theorizing about how various factors, such as race, support from parents and administrators, and teacher education programs were related to teachers' reported preparedness for race talk. Similarly, the Color-Blind Racism framework helped explain how teachers' responses, according to Bonilla-Silva (2014), tended to reflect a common ideology related to liberal ideals of equality, fairness, choice and individualism, rather than critical consciousness. In thinking about how race and social context features influenced teachers' feelings of preparedness for race talk, using the color-blind racism framework, one could argue that the social influence of color-blindness penetrates school contexts. That is, whether or not teachers develop a strong understanding of race in their teacher education programs, they may be dissuaded to talk about race, especially in majority White student contexts, as the data from chapter 2 showed. An emergent question for me is how can researchers

and teacher educators expect to prepare race-conscious teachers through teacher education programs and universities that have thrived on perpetuating color-blindness? And, what happens when teachers enter K-12 student settings that reject race-centered teaching practices?

In thinking about a shift toward race in teacher education programs, from a social movement standpoint, Milner (2008) argued that educators with equity-focused identities must converge to identify the present conditions and realities, as well as draw on prior evidence of related impacts of those conditions and realities. The purpose of such movements, he stressed, should be grounded in a goal for collective benefit and not for the benefit of any one person; thus, the movement must be sustained over time. Essentially, Milner's theoretical framing helps explain what is needed to motivate a disruptive movement in teacher education. Based on the fact that teachers in this study expressed a need for deeper knowledge of race, a fair assumption could be that for a major shift to occur in the broader teacher education structure, there must be a collective effort to better understand what teachers need to know about race.

5.2.1 Racial Critical Consciousness for Teachers

I argued that researchers and teacher educators must support teachers' development of knowledge and practices that center race in order to prepare teachers to teach all students well, while disrupting racial disparities and inequities. Building from prior literature and the findings from this dissertation, I want to suggest that one way to support teachers in building race-centered instructional practices is through developing their sense of *racial critical consciousness*. By racial critical consciousness, I am referring to a conceptual connection between Freire's (2000) idea of critical consciousness and Milner's (2007) framework for developing race-consciousness in educational contexts to avoid unintentionally perpetuating deficit beliefs and

inequitable practices. Friere (2000), referred to gaining critical consciousness as “learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (p. 35). Freire and Milner both acknowledge the importance of language, that is how teachers talk or do not talk about social issues of oppression, and engagement in disruptive actions. In essence, racial critical consciousness can be seen as a dual process by which teachers first recognize, through accessing racial knowledge and building race-consciousness, and then respond to issues of racial inequity through their discursive practices and engagement in disruptive action. Next, I offer a set of concepts related to developing racial critical consciousness: racial knowledge, race-consciousness, and a set of strategies used for disrupting racial inequity.

5.2.1.1 Racial knowledge

In terms of racial knowledge, research has stressed that teachers need a deeper understanding of race and the ways in which schools and society have contributed to racial inequity and negatively influenced opportunities for school success among many children of color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2012; Seider & Huguley, 2009). For teacher education programs, I envision racial knowledge as a nexus of social, historical, and political knowledge that reflects the inter-related concepts of race and racism in the U.S. (Omi & Winant, 2014). Insights related to racial knowledge are critical for teachers. Pollock and her colleagues (2010) offered that understanding race and racism, for teachers, precedes the development of race-centered practices. In other words, before teachers can gain a sense of race-consciousness and develop a set of tools, strategies, and practices that work to disrupt racial inequity and injustice, teachers must first explore and understand race and racism.

Teachers must have opportunities to explore the various ways that race is socially, historically, physically (not biologically) and legally constructed (Milner, 2015) to marginalize people of color through social systems of oppression, racism, and inequity (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Harris, 1993; Omi & Winant, 2014). Prior research has suggested that teacher education curricula can provide opportunities for teachers to explore and better understand race and racism by considering the following:

- Investigating legal cases that have not only supported the marginalization of people of color but also protected White people's interests, such as *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, and *Milliken v. Bradley* (Bell, 2004; Harris, 1993)
- Studying historical and present racialized media and popular culture depictions of people of color and White people (Busey, 2016; Guinier, 2004; Joanou, 2017; Mosley & Rogers, 2011)
- Incorporating various literatures to illustrate themes of race and justice (King, 2016; Ross, 2017)
- Preparing to address common issues teachers raise when learning about race (Brown & Brown, 2012; Gay & Howard, 2000)
- Being explicit about typical responses teachers may experience, such as fear or discomfort (Pollock et al, 2010)

Many of these race-related curriculum features demonstrate how to build opportunities for teachers to engage with race. The findings from this study showed that teacher education programs have a significantly strong influence on whether or not teachers feel prepared to engage race in the classroom. Moreover, these data imply that such opportunities for race-

engagement in teacher education are more greatly impactful on newer teachers with 3 or fewer years of experience.

5.2.1.2 Race-consciousness

In terms of race-consciousness, I am suggesting that teacher education programs promote teacher reflection and building connections with students' families and communities. Research has documented that engaging in reflection on race is a skill that teachers must develop to better understand themselves as racial beings in a shared social context with students who may have varying experiences and racial identities (Boyd & Glazier, 2017; Milner, 2003; Taylor, 2017). Many teachers in this dissertation reported that they believed race was important to discuss. Additionally, they reasoned that discussing race was useful for disrupting any prior deficit beliefs they had and for expanding what they claimed to "know" about race. I argued that teachers showed an emergent level of race-consciousness, but they seemed to counter their initial perspectives when they used language that demonstrated a color-blind orientation toward explaining and understanding issues related to race. Regarding parental support, I interpreted teachers' significantly different reports of preparedness for race talk, which depended on whether or not they taught mostly White students, as an issue of race-consciousness. My reasoning is that if teachers have developed a sense of race-consciousness, their views on racial matters should not be dependent on who or where they teach.

Milner (2007) outlined a framework for developing race-consciousness in educational contexts that I believe can be useful for teacher education programs to support teachers' race-consciousness, especially as it may relate to teacher reflection and teachers building connections to students' families and communities. I outline the tenets below and modify for use with pre-service teachers:

(a) reflect on teachers' own racial identities and experiences and the way in which their identity construction might influence how they see and understand the world and people.

(b) explore K-12 students' racial identities and experiences and the way in which students' and teachers' worldviews may conflict.

(c) engage in co-reflection between pre-service teachers and K-12 students, on local and national issues related to race and K-12 students' experiences.

(d) shift from self to system by learning to focus on how race and racism may influence structures and opportunities for K-12 students and students' families.

I believe Milner's framework can be seen as a starting point for reshaping teacher education programs to build opportunities for teachers to develop race-consciousness. By this I mean the four aforementioned tenets may be useful for teacher education programs to design opportunities to foster race-consciousness. Building on prior research, teacher education programs may also consider supporting teachers' race-consciousness by:

- Using race-reflection practices (Milner, 2003)
- Establishing critical reflection as a regular teacher practice (Pollock et al, 2016)
- Using journaling and critically engaged dialogue as means to build self-reflective skills (Mason, 2016)
- Playing modified games with pre-service teachers as entry points for discussing issues of race and equity with teachers (Jost & Whitfield, 2005)
- Designing multicultural service-learning projects for small groups to connect with students' families and communities (Endo, 2015)

- Building practices to use independent study for teachers to evaluate their practices in recognizing issues of race (Milner, 2015)
- Examining patterns of racial inequity inside of schools across areas, such as discipline or educational access (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2017; CRDC, 2016)
- Examining patterns of racial inequity outside of schools, especially with poverty and opportunity distributions (Munin, 2012; Proctor, Semega, & Kollar, 2016; Tate, 2008)

While teachers in this dissertation highlighted independent study and personal experiences as levers for their feelings of preparedness for race talk, they appeared to lack race-consciousness as evidenced by their responses. Here, I am referring back to Freire (1970) and Milner (2007) who acknowledged the way in which language can reflect one's orientation and level of consciousness. I argued that opportunities to build race-consciousness might have helped teachers in this sample build analytic skills to more clearly interpret their personal experiences.

5.2.1.3 Engagement in disruptive action

While the two previous sections addressed racial knowledge and race-consciousness, both related to helping teachers recognize issues of racial inequity, this section discusses engagement in disruptive action. Teachers' engagement in actions that counter and disrupt racial inequity may be dependent on whether or not they have a set of strategies and practices. For this reason, Milner (2015) argued, whether or not teachers are prepared to engage race could be critical for advancing educational equity or fighting against it. Throughout this dissertation, I have incorporated race talk as one practice that may disrupt racial inequity. Sue (2015) referred to race talk as dialogues that address issues of race, racism, Whiteness and White privilege. He also characterized race talk as threatening and explosive, perhaps because it challenges and

disrupts structures of power and privilege, which could explain why most teachers in this sample expressed either fear or feelings of unpreparedness for race talk.

Along with engaging in race dialogues, consider another practical example using Freire's (1970) problem posing for developing racial critical consciousness. Teacher educators might pose problems related to race, racism, or police brutality to their teacher education students using a visual image of Michael Brown (the unarmed Black boy who was killed) or Darren Wilson (the White police officer who killed Michael Brown). Then, teachers would be asked to respond to the "problem" of police violence. Following the dialogue, teacher educators would analyze teachers' discourse and revisit how linguistic structures reflect ideological beliefs. Teacher educators might identify the particular parts of teachers responses that symbolize color—blindness, for example, and offer new linguistic structures teachers can use.

In addition to race talk and problem posing, the literature offers the following ways teacher educators can support teachers' development of strategies and practices to disrupt racial inequity, particularly by modeling how to:

- join and critique broader conversations, such as discourses on police violence, that attempt to perpetuate racial inequalities (Blanchett & Wynne, 2007)
- confront institutional policies and practices that deemphasize race, such as color-blind teacher education curriculum (Allen et al, 2017; Austin, 2009; Zion, Allen & Jean, 2016)
- reject false empathy, particularly when discussing race (Warren & Hotchkins, 2015)
- dispel common ideologies, such as uninformed orientations toward equity and fairness, that often pose as race-consciousness (Philip, 2012)

5.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although there are opportunities to build on the current TRTS data set, which I discuss in this section, there is much to gain from analyzing subgroups of teachers in the current data set. For example, to what degree do teachers' reported beliefs and feelings toward race talk differ by content area, grade level, region of the country, or type of teacher education program? One study would address how early childhood and elementary educators describe their beliefs and feelings toward discussing race. There is certainly room for discussion on when young children are ready to talk about issues of race. As I have discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, teachers' beliefs and orientations toward issues can dictate whether or not children have opportunities to learn about race. Another future study would compare differences among English language arts and social studies teachers with math and science teachers. The data in this study led me to believe that math and science teachers would be less likely to engage issues of race with students. For example, several instances of teacher excerpts showed that race was appropriate to discuss, but not in math or science classes. There are numerous other ways to analyze the current TRTS data to better understand how subgroups of teachers may reflect different beliefs and feelings toward race talk.

Building on the TRTS research, I also plan to develop an observation and interview component to the TRTS. Semi-structured interviews (Seidman, 2013) could help extend findings in this study by exploring, for instance, why student racial demographic is so greatly related to teachers' feelings of preparedness for race talk. I think observations and interview data would extend what researchers and teacher educators know about supporting teachers in building race-centered practices. Given that so little evidence of race talk exists, additional insights would provide a deeper understanding of teachers' resistance toward and fear of race dialogues. Using

an ethnographic approach to observe and record how teachers in particular school settings demonstrate or avoid race talk practices would be helpful for future teacher education curriculum design.

Including other school context variables, such as urban or rural, could also expand the TRTS. Moreover, the TRTS could be expanded to include constructs related to feelings of preparedness, as well as a range of inside and outside of school issues related to race. For instance, survey items may include beliefs about discussing issues related to poverty, mass incarceration, community violence, schooling options, and trauma. I would also suggest broadening the TRTS to include a scaled response option in order to gain even more insight into specific domains. For example, teachers reported it was important to discuss race, but to what degree do teachers believe certain race-related topics should be discussed? Similarly, teachers reported feeling unprepared due to fear, but to what degree does their unpreparedness, and fear, perhaps, relate to parents, students' race, not having enough experience, or not having opportunities and resources. I think a new version of the TRTS could give researchers a deeper sense of which factors more or less greatly influence preparedness.

I plan to extend the TRTS work by exploring how community-nominated teachers engage in race talk. Using a case study approach, I plan on incorporating several points of data. In addition to survey data, observations, and interviews, I think it would be insightful to hear students talk about how the teachers incorporate race dialogues into their classrooms. I believe the student voice component is essential because one reason for discussing race is to engage students in broader social issues. I think one of the related questions I would be interested in is whether or not students feel like teachers address race enough. I think a case study approach

would help to develop core components of race dialogue for future researchers to explore among other teachers in various school contexts.

5.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research is essential as we think about the state of race in society and in our schools. Schools continue to be places where many students of color are underserved and teachers are underprepared to teach them (Milner & Laughter, 2015; Sleeter, 2017). Teachers in this study, and those I have worked with, are somewhat aware that racial inequities exist; however, their understandings and interpretations of racial inequities tend to be vague. Teachers' understanding of how race operates in our current society plays an essential role in whether not students of color will continue to be underserved. Bringing clarity to teachers' vague understandings of race, I believe, is only one struggle in the fight for educational equity. We must encourage teachers to continue moving from simply gaining a sense of clarity toward actual engagement with issues of race and, ultimately, toward developing a sense of racial critical consciousness.

Preparing teachers to center race in their work must be a core of teacher education. I am suggesting that racial be embedded into all of our work. Because race is constantly operating in schools and society, strategies must be embedded to counter both historical and present inequities. In other words, racial inequity occurs due to the nature of our social systems, which means an intentional disruptive effort has to be made. This is clearly an issue of either promoting educational equity or rejecting it; thus, we all must share the “burden of race” (Matias &

Grossland, 2016). Race problems are everyone's problems. Therefore, teachers must be prepared to work with students to create a disruptive movement toward racial equity and justice.

The research on race talk that I presented, as well as the research from my colleagues at the Center for Urban Education, highlights how and why recognizing and responding to race-related issues is essential for promoting educational equity. We see discussions about race, especially in school contexts, as a starting place for some teachers to move beyond simply gaining insights about race. We recognize both avoiding race talk and talking about race from a colorblind perspective can contribute to racial inequity. This research shows that there is a need to have a strategically designed curriculum for teaching about race in teacher education. Recognizing and responding to racial inequity should be what our teachers and we focus on most (Freire, 1970; Milner, 2015).

As I reflect on the state of race in schools and society, I know we still have much to do, but I am encouraged by the students, teachers, teacher educators, researchers, deans of schools, community members and parents who are unafraid to engage in race talks. I envision our dialogues about race becoming integral in all the questions we ask, the decisions we make, and the stories we tell. When race talks from within our classrooms penetrate the walls of our schools and other institutions in society, our movement toward educational equity will have real momentum.

APPENDIX A

TEACHERS RACE TALK SURVEY

Demographic information:

- Grade level
 - Pre-kindergarten
 - Elementary
 - Middle school
 - High school
- Subject area
 - English language arts
 - Math
 - Social studies
 - Science
 - Other
- Years teaching (meant for in-service only)
- Teacher race
 - American Indian/Alaska Native;
 - Asian American;
 - Black
 - Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander;
 - Latinx
 - White
 - Multi-racial
- Teachers' report of students' race
 - Primarily Asian American
 - Primarily Black
 - Primarily Latinx
 - Primarily White
 - Racially diverse
- Region of the country
 - Midwest:

- Northeast
- South:
- West:

Binary indicators

- Pre/in-service status
- Traditional/non-traditional teacher education program

Forced response (yes, no or not sure) close-ended items. The survey offers an open-ended response option following each close-ended item

Do you believe race plays a role in the educational experiences of your students?

Do you believe the topic of race is important to discuss with the students in your classroom?

Do you believe that teachers should discuss racism and racial discrimination with their students?

Do you believe that teachers should discuss recent instances of violence against Black people with their students (e.g. Trayvon Martin, Sandra Bland, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Philando Castile)?

Do you believe teachers should discuss recent violence against police officers with their students (e.g. the police shooting in Dallas, TX)?

Do you feel prepared to have conversations about race in your classroom?

Do you believe your teacher-training program prepared you to discuss race in your classroom?

Do you believe your students' parents/guardians would support conversations about race in your classroom?

Do you believe the administration at your school supports conversations about race inside the classroom?

Do you believe that it is your responsibility to help your students acquire the skills to critically analyze and respond to social injustice?

Do you feel prepared to help your students acquire the skills to critically analyze and respond to social injustices?

Do you believe the administration and teachers at your school would be supportive of student organizing and activism?

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